

SPECIAL ISSUE! XLR8R UNCOVERS THE WINDY CITY'S BEST MUSIC, ART AND STYLE

# XLR8R

91  
OCTOBER  
2005

ACCELERATING MUSIC AND CULTURE

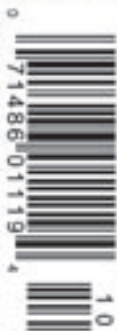
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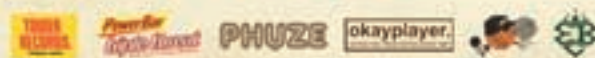
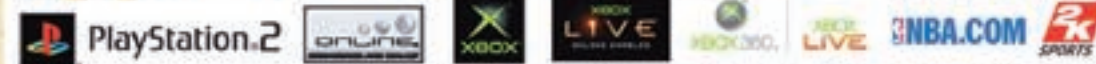
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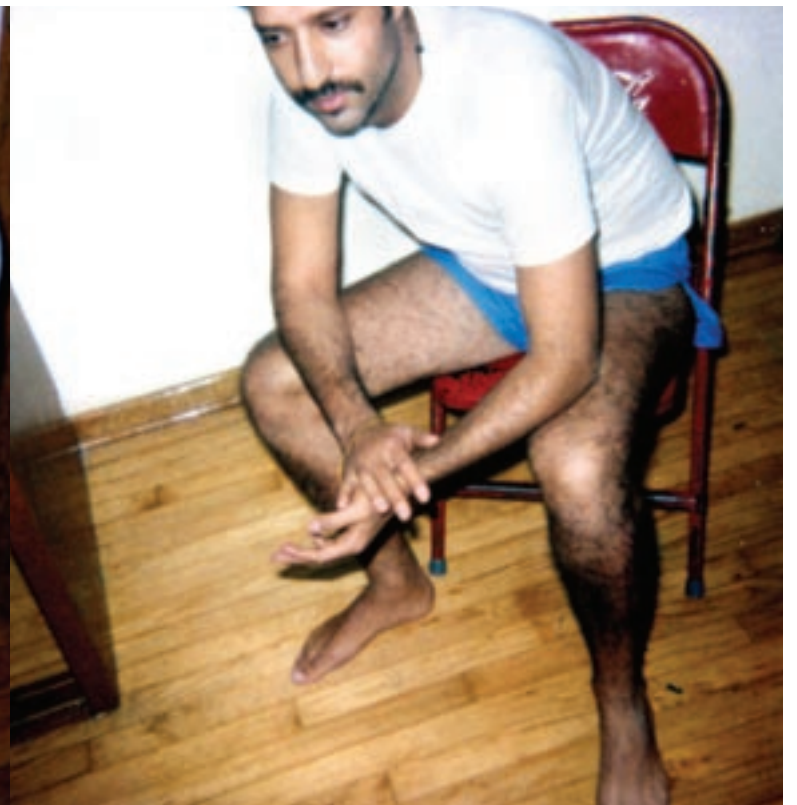
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# Meet Memo.

He's a 31-year old creative director living in Mexico City (where these Polaroid was taken). Memo is wearing the Summer Shirt with our new Poplin Short, available in stores.

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CHICAGO

Seven from Chocolate Industries shows his Chicago pride. Photo: Chris Eichenseher at Sonotheque, Co.



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## ED'S RANT MY CHICAGO



XLR8R Editor Vivian Host raving in a Midwestern field with 34" Grind pants from Untitled (Even Further, 1997).

Grinnell, Iowa. Northfield, Minnesota. It was May of 1995 and I was on a tour of Midwest liberal arts colleges with my mom. After mile after mile of cornfields, sullen cows and Cracker Barrel restaurants, Chicago finally rose out of the prairie like an oasis. I heaved a sigh of relief when our rental car finally rounded the corner onto Lakeshore Drive, Navy Pier twinkling on the right and over 1,700 feet of Sears Tower looming on the left.

I'd like to say I fell in love with Chicago then and there but it actually happened the next night. After looking around Northwestern (the "Midwest ivy league") in the beautiful suburb of Evanston, then perusing the selection of fat pants at Untitled—renowned at the time for having the largest leg openings in rave pants, at 45" inches—I stumbled across a flyer for a party with Danny Breaks and AK1200. I remember being amazed that one of the top producers in the British jungle scene would be playing in Chicago instead of Los Angeles. The party raged all night in the best setting possible: an abandoned factory; as a harsh dawn broke and my cab sped past the supertowers of the Cabrini Green projects, I was convinced of the Midwest's magic.

I didn't get into Northwestern. I didn't get into Grinnell or Carleton College either—although spending four years in a one-Dairy-Queen town was, by that point, totally out of the question. I ended up in Berkeley, California, but I still visited Chicago at least twice a year to DJ. It never got any less awesome, from the mundane—combing through the racks at Gramophone, eating massive quantities of lasagna with techno DJ Acidman, late-night stoner runs with junglists Snuggles and Slak to the White Hen Pantry—to the extraordinary, like the breathtaking underwater views of the Shedd Aquarium and being able to see Paul Johnson, Traxx, Funk, Milton and Decon all DJ on the same night at the now-legendary Route 66 roller rink. In two days there, I once saw MF Doom play at The Metro, went to a banging BassByThePound drum & bass party at Big Wig, saw Derrick Carter spin and pounded cheap beers with Slug and Kathryn from Biz 3 at the Rainbo, an indie rock dive bar that looks like something out of *Laverne & Shirley*.

I always look forward to visiting Chicago. It's like an old friend—no matter how much it changes on the exterior, it always feels familiar. And the people I know I there are refreshingly down-to-earth. They're not out for fame—truth be told, there's not much to be had—so there's little left to concentrate on besides music, friends and having fun.

In the decision-making process for our fourth annual city issue, Chicago won by a landslide over cities in Europe and Canada—and putting together this issue was exciting. Everything except the reviews section is Chicago-focused, and art director Brianna Pope pulled off an amazing feat by using only Chicago-based graphic designers and nearly all Chicago photographers. I dare say the look and content of this issue will be enough to convince even the most hardened coastal cynic that the Midwest rocks. Don't sleep.

- Vivian Host, Editor



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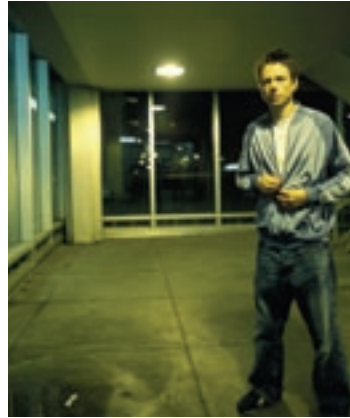
Chuck has been turning out amazing work for *XLR8R* since he was a wee lad, under the name NoPattern. He is, hands-down, Brianna's favorite contributor. It's about time he rocks a cover, and it is quite fitting since he hails from the Chicago area. Chuck's recent clients have included Fifty24, Audi, JB Classics, Absolut and lots of magazines throughout the country. This led to his first speaking gig at the Semi-Permanent design conference in New York in September.

[www.nopattern.com](http://www.nopattern.com)



### STACEY DUGAN

Stacey Dugan resides in Chicago, where she edits a local arts and entertainment magazine that only wishes it could be as cool as *XLR8R*. When not sacrificing her nights and weekends to the seemingly endless task of fixing up other people's words and making them sound pretty, she tries to go to as many art, music and film events as is humanly possible.



### CHRIS EICHENSEER / SOMEODDPILOT, CO.

Chris is a thin man with a belly full of aspirin. He does push-ups while opening large computer files. He has a bike with a basket, which many consider not tough. He shoots pictures, designs and plays the drums. He is surrounded within Someoddpilot's Chicago office by mysterious friends who paint, code and run record labels. "You should come over sometime. It will be awesome," he says.

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### MORGAN HARRIS

A year and a half ago, Morgan discovered that she had neither the skills for nor inclination towards a full-time, grown-up job and high-tailed it back to sweet home Chicago from Brooklyn. When she's not customizing SweetAction t-shirts, she's counting on the use of her middle initial K to break the children's book market wide open (after Ms. Rowling finishes her opus next year, that is). Check out more of her stuff in art/craft magazines like *FiberArts*, and at [www.of-the-sea.com](http://www.of-the-sea.com).



### J.R. NELSON

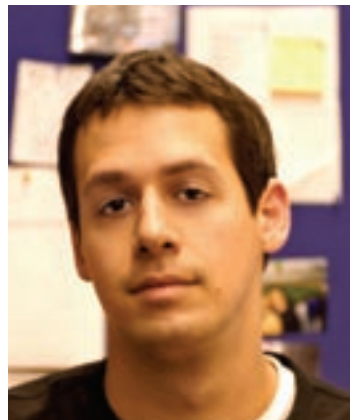
J.R. Nelson is a writer from Chicago, Illinois. His work has appeared in *XLR8R*, *Punk Planet* and the *Village Voice*. He is really hoping the Chicago White Sox can somehow win the World Series. He could then fulfill his lifelong ambition of driving around the nation resplendent in Sox gear, booming out Westside Connection's "Bow Down" for the entire next year.



### RAY NOLAND / C.R.O.

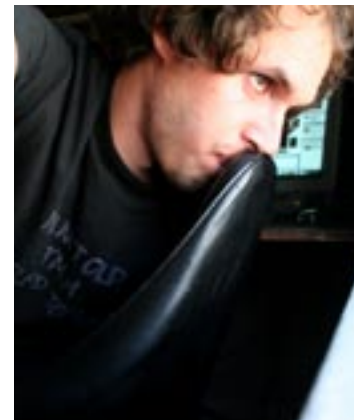
Ray is one of those individuals who keeps creeping up. His tenacious attitude and style are impossible to ignore. He lives in Chicago and is the mastermind behind *BLACKLIST*®, an online magazine devoted to under-the-radar talent in music, art and design. He's also an avid backcountry camper, spending his extra time during the summer kickin' it in national parks all over Michigan and Wisconsin. Blueberry pancakes anyone?

[www.theblacklistmag.com](http://www.theblacklistmag.com)



### PATRICK SISSON

Patrick Sisson, who wrote the city guide for this issue, is a Chicago-based writer and editor who is always down to distribute some pro-Windy City propaganda, especially if it involves "researching" dozens of cheap bars. Let's just say it was a marathon he has been training for most of his life.



### MATTHEW TAPLINGER

Matthew Taplinger is a 28-year-old photographer based in Chicago, where he's been living for over three years now. Much of his spare time is spent banging on the drums, riding bikes, sampling bourbon and avoiding SUVs.

[www.nonformat.org](http://www.nonformat.org)



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## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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gentrify this event, that would be awesome.  
*Malcolm W, Oakland, CA*

### Gary Powell from Soul Summit responds:

We seek to provide an event that is inclusive of everyone, which is the case with the Soul Summit Music Festival. We agree, it's a pristine event and remains so because of its very hip and well-mannered attendees who are diverse in age, race, beliefs, sexual orientation and class. That's what house music is all about. I would ask attendees not to be concerned about a mention of Soul Summit Music Festival in *XLR8R* compromising the integrity of the event, but be more concerned about the preservation of the event, so others have an opportunity to experience what you have and get an opportunity to develop equally passionate feelings about the event.

### Vinyl Hunter

Do you guys still produce vinyl records, 'cause I have a couple of old ones by astral matrix and professor smith and they're tight. Would like to get my hands on more.  
*Darfnaagle*

### Andrew Smith responds:

The days of *XLR8R* putting out tunes on vinyl have come and gone. Our last release was in 1996 called *Big Shots*, consisting of up-and-coming San Francisco

drum & bass producers. We've discovered the internet since then, and you can find our newest releases on iTunes with a compilation series called *Wanted*. Just type "XLR8R" into the iTunes search field.

### Monika Magic

I just wanted to say thank you for the *reeeeeally* nice artwork on our Monika feature! Who's the guy who made it? Is he a fan? It looks fantastic!

*Uta, Berlin, MarkeB 05*

### Brianna responds:

Nigel Dennis did the artwork; see more of his work at [www.electriceat.org](http://www.electriceat.org). Check out his six-page spread in this issue (page 58), where he kills it yet again. Oh, and I'm sure he's a fan of your music—I certainly am!

### Corrections:

In *The Studio* with Madlib (issue #88) was written by Brolin Winning. In issue #89's *Track City* piece, we incorrectly identified the Montreal location. It should read Place D'Armes, Montreal. Soul Summit (Spin Cycle, issue #89) takes place in Fort Greene Park, not Prospect Park and the resident DJs are Jeff Mendoza, Sadiq and Tabu. In issue #90's *Spin Cycle* we incorrectly stated that Ghostly International has a digital download store; they have an online CD and vinyl store.

### Save The Summit

I have really been feelin' *XLR8R* for years now—y'all are holding it down! That said, I have a strong request to make: *please* don't advertise the Soul Summit in NYC anymore! It's so pristine and pure of cultural gentrification. I have rasta friends that lament not feeling safe when they take their children to reggae shows, cuz there are white folks there who wanna take pictures of the "exotic" rasta family. And we all know what's happening to the hip-hop scene. I got mad love for y'all, but if you think you can back me up as white allies, and not help culturally

## XLR8R'S "CHICAGO FIRE" CONTEST

Win limited edition t-shirts and books from Imperfect Articles plus a CD and videogame from Decon and 2K Games.

Fine art meets hip-hop in *XLR8R*'s Chicago Fire contest. Founded by Chicago's Noah Singer and Mike Andrews, **Imperfect Articles** makes the coolest handmade 100% cotton t-shirts. They work with a ton of artists including Gabe Fowler, Surabhi Ghosh, Maya Hayuk, Cody Hudson and Johanna Winter-Harper. *XLR8R* will send a couple of lucky winners a shirt and two limited edition books (*Robots* and *Rainbow*) designed by artist Chris Uphues. Art Institute of Chicago graduate Uphues' work is an oddball visual tableau that features Japanese toys, robots, popular and anonymous objects, graffiti, videogames, comics and fireworks. We'll also throw in the dopest basketball videogame ever created, **NBA 2K6**, plus the soundtrack to the game (featuring The Roots, Common, Redman, Lyrics Born, Aceyalone, Jean Grae, RJD2, Little Brother, Blackalicious, Hieroglyphics, Zion I and Aesop Rock) and a shirt, all from **2K Sports** and **Decon**. How to win? Tell us why Chicago is the greatest city ever. The most creative short answer (three-six sentences only) will win the grand prize! So get out your pens and keyboards and get to praising Chi-Town!

**Grand Prize:** One male winner and one female winner will receive an Imperfect Articles t-shirt and book by Chris Uphues, and an *NBA 2K6* videogame, CD and shirt from Decon and 2K.

**Four runners-up will receive:** an *NBA 2K6* videogame, CD and shirt from Decon and 2K.

Entries will be accepted via mail and email. Entries must be received by Oct 21, 2005. Send your answers to *XLR8R*'s "Chicago Fire" contest, 1388 Haight St. #105, San Francisco, CA 94117 or email [contest@xlr8r.com](mailto:contest@xlr8r.com) with "Chicago Fire" in the subject line.  
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## BJ "BITTER" BASTARD'S CHICAGO INSTITUTIONS



The worst part is that they inspired other cities: Cincinnati presented big pigs, Toronto painted moose statues and the hippies of Chicanum, Washington proposed the "Soul Salmon" project.

**3. Wicker Park** All the macramé brooches and pierced girls riding granny bikes you can stand, plus hipper-than-thou indie rock bars and yuppies crowding the Starbucks. To most Chicagoans, the worst in gentrification. And Liz Phair and Wesley Willis are the area's celebrities.

**4. Chicago accents** Chicagoans are hands down the most nasal people in America, which they then combine with Eastern European-derived vocal tics (some of you will remember the Mike Ditka/"Da Bears" skit on *SNL*). Further proof that American English is not a romance language.

**5. Chicago water tower** Oscar Wilde called it "a monstrosity with pepper boxes stuck all over it." Surprising he didn't like this monument—located at Michigan and Chicago Avenues—especially since it looks like a giant penis stuck in the middle of a ton of highrises.

**6. Talk shows** Some really terrific movies have been filmed in Chicago: *My Best Friend's Wedding*, *Soul Food*...and who could forget the droll *My Big Fat Greek Wedding*. But talk shows are really where Chicago shines, as it's home to the inspirational rot of *Oprah*, America's think tank *Jerry Springer* and washed up MILF/hag *Jenny Jones*, who really needs to stop shopping at Forever 21.

**1. Chicago hot dogs** Chicago hot dogs are a perversion of the pig by-product's finest hour. First, they estrange the dog from its soul mate, ketchup, then they mar it by putting yellow mustard, relish, chopped onion, sport peppers, a kosher dill pickle, a cucumber spear, tomato slices and celery salt on top. It's basically Chicago's version of a salad.

**2. Chicago "Cows on Parade"** Five years ago, the City of Chicago came up with this nifty idea to allow "artists" to paint life-sized fiberglass cows. You couldn't go anywhere without seeing one of these visual eyesores, which had names like "Moooooonwalk" (a space-themed cow) and "Chi-COW-Go."

**7. Racial segregation** Once home to Cabrini Green, the most insidious housing projects in the US, Chicago is still racially divided thanks to the Chicago Housing Authority, who are pushing predominately black Section 8 residents out of the city. By the way, there's a Southside neighborhood called Marynook populated predominately by light-skinned black people; this is a leftover from the 1950s, when white residents would only sell their houses to people who were lighter than a brown paper bag.

**8. Chicago parking** Chicago *does* have the El—it's as rickety as a wooden rollercoaster—but most people prefer to drive, even when that means intense traffic jams on Lakeshore Drive and cruising Damen for 45 minutes praying for a spot.

**9. ATA Airlines** If you're looking for a cheap flight to Chicago, you will end up on ATA. Don't let its Mayan pyramid-esque logo dupe you—riding an ATA plane makes you feel like a research chimp packed into a cage that hasn't been cleaned since the 1970s. Arriving at Midway Airport is scarcely better, although they do have *two* Gold Coast hot dog stands.

**10. Cubs fans** Cubs fans, a superstitious people, believe their team was cursed in 1945 when the stadium refused to admit a tavern proprietor named Billy Goat Sianis with his pet goat, Murphy. Ooooookay.

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[www.rotofugi.com](http://www.rotofugi.com)



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**Cariton shoe by Gravis**  
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[www.gravisfootwear.com](http://www.gravisfootwear.com)







**BLAZE OF GLORY**  
Indie bands play torch songs for abandoned buildings

Take one white-shingled bungalow, add the best indie rock names, then douse in gasoline and you get the blaze known as *Burn To Shine* (Trixie DVD, \$12). The second in this DVD series—which originated January 25th of this year in Washington D.C.—finds producer Brendan Canty (of Fugazi fame) and filmmaker Christoph Green traveling to Chicago to film nine of the city's bands—including Wilco, Shellac, Freakwater, Tortoise and The Ponys—rocking out in an about-to-be-demolished house. The bands turn in inspired performances in this temporal setting, and the crisp, clean footage gets turned into a 45-minute DVD. Included is footage of the Tight Phantomz banging out the classic rock-inflected "Ninja Talk," Jeremy "The Lonesome Organist" Jacobsen doing his vaudevillian one-man show and, of course, elegiac shots of the house falling to the ground. *Burn To Shine* is hot shit, and a must for indie rock completists. *Tyra Bangs*

*Burn to Shine 02: Chicago* is available through Touch & Go; *Burn To Shine 03: Portland* will be available soon. [www.trixiedvd.com](http://www.trixiedvd.com)

Clockwise from top left: The Ponys performing live; Wilco on the steps of the condemned house; Freakwater performing live; *Burn to Shine* cover



XLR8R Magazine and adidas Originals are proud to announce the limited edition hardcover re-issue of *Bedroom Rockers: Where DJs Call Home*.

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This limited edition book, featuring photography by Christopher Woodcock, is available for sale at all adidas Originals Stores and at [adidas.com](http://adidas.com).







An aerial view of the DEPART-ment craft fair

**IT'S CRAFTY**  
DEPART-ment is not your mother's craft fair.

The phrase "Midwestern art/craft fair" brings to mind an endless parade of stalls selling earnest, homely little items like plastic Southern belle dolls in crocheted hoopskirts. Not so **DEPART-ment**, the brainchild of Marshall Preheim and an equally dedicated squadron of volunteers. Any kind of handmade item can be submitted to this egalitarian, non-juried craft fair. Buyers can peruse ethically produced goods that are more likely to be found in the bag of someone on their way to an Animal Collective show than in grandma's house. Volunteers set up on-site and market items

for a mere 10% of the sales—the craftspersons range from Chicago-based lines (including clothing designers Glean Design and greeting card makers Tennis Anyone?) to participants from as far away as Tokyo. So far, DEPART-ment is just a Chicago thing, but the crew is devising a computerized template that will allow this model to be duplicated anywhere by anyone with internet access. Meanwhile, we can all rest easier knowing that a backlash to Wal-Mart-style consumerism is well in effect. *Morgan Harris*  
[www.depart-ment.com](http://www.depart-ment.com)

**BEAT HAPPENING**

The City of Chicago brings the party to the public.

Imagine legendary DJs spinning free of charge, outdoors, in the middle of a bustling metropolis. Last year, Chicago's Department of Cultural Affairs made this utopia a reality. With a DJ series called **Chicago SummerDance**, the city invited big names like Bad Boy Bill, Derrick Carter and Frankie Knuckles to spin for capacity crowds every Wednesday for 10 weeks. Located in the tranquil Spirit of Music Garden right off of Michigan Avenue, this year's series continued to showcase Chicago house and its rich history (Farley "Jackmaster" Funk, Marshall Jefferson, Ron Carroll) while also bringing in out-of-town heavy-hitters like Superpitcher and Rich Medina. "There's really no method to the madness—it's just good DJs," explains Brian Keigher, a program coordinator for the Department of Cultural Affairs. Though the crowd largely consists of club kids and DJs, Keigher says Summerdance also serves as a history lesson for the uninitiated. "Some older folks are like, 'Oh, I listen to this at the gym. I didn't realize that this was Chicago house music,'" he says. "I just want to educate the masses one step at a time and give some DJs a break and some recognition in their own backyard." *Max Herman*  
[www.cityofchicago.org/CulturalAffairs/SummerDance](http://www.cityofchicago.org/CulturalAffairs/SummerDance)



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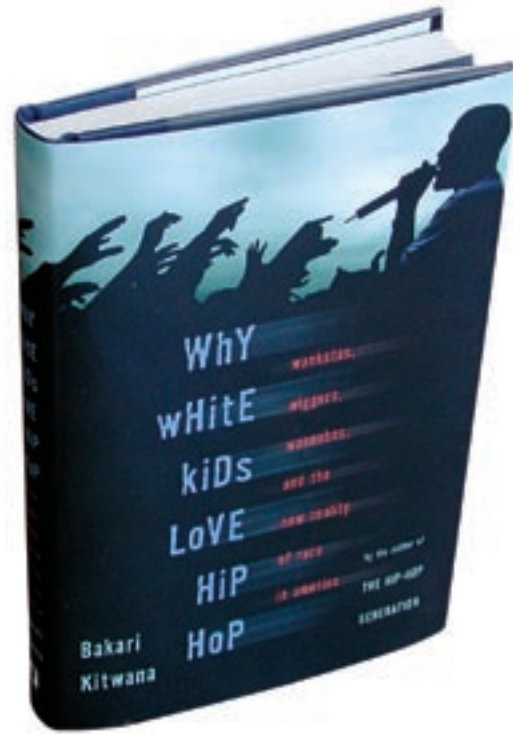


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## WHITE OR WRONG?

Exploring the new face of hip-hop

Hip-hop journalist Bakari Kitwana's latest book digs painstakingly deep into the relationship between race and hip-hop, encouraging honest dialogue in the process. **Why White Kids Love Hip-Hop: Wankstas, Wiggers, Wannabes, and the New Reality of Race In America** (hardcover; Basic Civitas Books, \$23) may be academic in tone, but it's surprisingly accessible. Kitwana draws upon the voices of various white hip-hop listeners and even Hollywood comedies to help dismantle the ever-altering, and increasingly white face, of hip-hop's fan base and to explore how this culture may be the last hope for our generation. *XLR8R* caught up with Kitwana to discuss his ambitious inquiries. *Max Herman*  
[www.basiccivitasbooks.com](http://www.basiccivitasbooks.com)

**When did you first notice that hip-hop was starting to infiltrate suburbia and white America?** It's been clear for close to a decade. I don't think that it's something new. What was [disconcerting] to me was that it wasn't being discussed. It was almost like people were afraid to talk about it.

**Why is it especially crucial in 2005 to address it?** Because it's gotten so mainstream, and because you have so many media outlets weighing in on hip-hop who don't really know the culture; we're at a point where the power and the possibility for what it really means is gonna be lost if we don't start talking about it.

**As hip-hop continues to globalize and everyone becomes welcome to participate, whose responsibility is it to remind future hip-hop fans of its foundation in the black experience?** I think that it's the responsibility of the listener. I think the listener has a responsibility to hip-hop to understand its cultural roots. One of the things that I see happening with hip-hop now and with this book is that hip-hop is forcing a different conversation about race among young people. It's forcing young people to think about the origins of the country.



Author Bakari Kitwana

## WATCH THIS SPACE

Chicago's groundbreaking Foundation Gallery goes west

In 2003, curators Elizabeth Cline and Michael Coleman brought Chicago's **Foundation Gallery** to life; their concept was to create a space for "artmaking within social environments that are often overlooked by the mainstream art community." Cline's on-target experience with the business side of running a gallery and Coleman's years overseeing the graphic content of *Punk Planet* and *Bail* magazines combined with circumstances that "just made us think that we had this really good opportunity to really support cultures that we've been inspired by," says Cline. Foundation's expected street art focus is tempered by presenting a range of artists, from those with an established body of commercial work (Cody Hudson, Ben Loiz, Justin Fines/Demo) to a hidden cache of unsung fine art heroes like Chicago-based artist Jay Ryan, who Cline says is "part of the new wave of [venue] postermaking." Cline and Coleman plan to continue repping Chicago's finest young talent, even after they move the gallery to Los Angeles this month. By spring of next year, the to-be-determined space will be open for viewing art that "definitely has this youthful quality about it, but [is presented in an] atmosphere [that] makes people take it seriously." *Morgan Harris*  
[www.foundation-gallery.org](http://www.foundation-gallery.org)

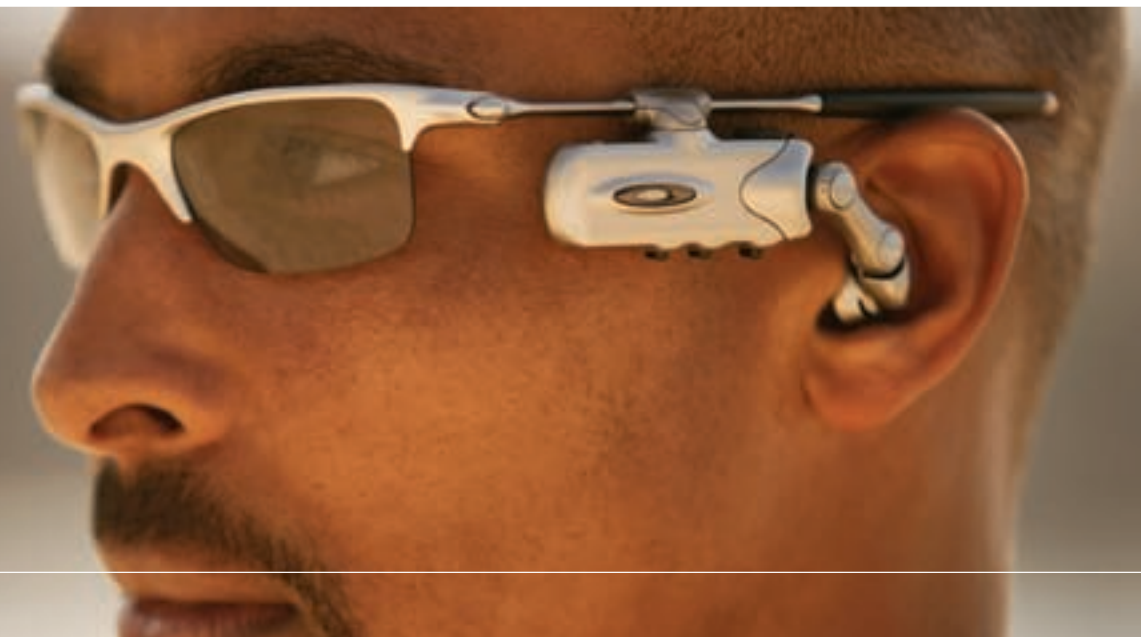


Michael Coleman and Elizabeth Cline [Photo: Calbee Booth]

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# MOTOFREEDOM

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SPIN CYCLE

News and gossip from the music world

**Giant Step** continues its 15-year anniversary celebrations by partnering with Ki-Bi to release the **Ki-Bi mobile content card**; it will allow users to download exclusive ring tones and wallpapers, listen to music and win tickets to events. The technology, which is already popular in Europe, has not been used in the US yet. [www.giantstep.net](http://www.giantstep.net) **Time Out Guides** and Deaf Dumb & Blind Communications will launch **The Other Side**, a combination CD mixtape and DVD guide to the "other side" of cities around the world. The first round is out October 25, with *The Other Side of New York* featuring Fischerspooner, *The Other Side of London* featuring Damian Lazarus and *The Other Side of Paris* featuring Black Strobe. Acid house pioneer **DJ Pierre's Afro Acid Project** will pay homage to his roots while showing his innovative perspective on music today. "I am very excited about being head of my own label (DJP) and [to have] the opportunity to make my first full album due out in January," said DJ Pierre. **Dancehall singjay Sizzla**, riding high on the charts with songs like "Ain't Gonna See Us Fall" and "Dem Vex," has signed with the **Damon Dash Music Group (DDMG)**. Expect an early 2006 release from the veteran reggae artist. **Inertia Records** is readying two new albums from **Hefner** and **The Electones**. Hefner's release was recorded in Berlin, London and Vancouver and will feature **Frazey Ford**, lead singer of the Canadian rootsy/Americana band The Be Good Tanyas. This fall, German/American future jazz concern **Obliq Sound** will release Grand Pianoramax's "Freestyle Figures" 12" featuring remixes by **Atjazz** and **Yam Who?** That's followed by *Obliqsound Remixes Vol. 2* CD in February 2006 with the likes of Riton, Matthew Herbert, Waiwan, Domu and Nu Spirit Helsinki contributing. Dope Danish exports **Owusu & Hannibal** have a new Ubiquity 12" that'll be turning heads and moving hips! "Delirium" and "Blue Jay" are already



getting serious nods on CD-r. Think Moodymann meets Steely Dan meets Scritti Politti meets J-Dilla meets Jorge Ben meets Spacek and you're getting kinda close. **Roland's** got an awesome new battery-powered mini-sampler. The new **SP-404's** sleek look is complimented by offering a CompactFlash slot, a built-in microphone for quick sampling sessions, 12 large pads, three control knobs, jumbo display and 29 effects, including new Subsonic, BPM Looper and more. [www.rolandusa.com](http://www.rolandusa.com) **Gravis** footwear is offering an exclusive collector's edition shoe constructed from three original canvases painted by **Marok**, **Delta** and **Matt Sewell**. Commissioned in February for Manchester's contemporary streetwear tradeshow The Park, the three 2mx2m canvas panels were cut up to become part of the Comet Mid shoe. Only 36 shoes were made from each canvas. **MHI** has teamed up with the **Anti Nazi League** and its **Love Music Hate Racism** campaign to release a t-shirt for AW05, with proceeds going directly to the charity. The Anti Nazi League is dedicated to halting the growth of the British National Party (BNP) and other neo-Nazi groups such as the National Front and Combat 18. [www.dpmhi.com](http://www.dpmhi.com) **Danny Rampling**—remixer of everyone from Gypsy Kings to Erasure to Big Audio Dynamite—retires from DJing this New Year's Eve and goes into the restaurant business, serving modern eclectic cuisine. No jokes about the food being "cheesy," please. **Be checking for the new Douglas Greed 12**; "Construction Time Again" (Combination). With remixes from Lopez and Robag Wruhme, it's a sleazy techno gem! iPod users can now download the excellent future jazz/new music broadcast **OFFtrack Radioshow**, hosted by Dirk Rumpff. In your iTunes program window go to the Advanced menu, click "Subscribe to podcast" and submit this url: [feeds.feedburner.com/Offtrack](http://feeds.feedburner.com/Offtrack). **RIP Robert Moog**, the creator of the Moog synthesizer popular with everyone from Stereolab to ALR to Tangerine Dream died Sunday August 21 in Ashville, N.C. He was 71.

1. Frazey Ford; 2. Sizzla; 3. SP-404; 4. Erasure; 5. Damon Dash; 6. Anti Nazi League

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# CHICAGO ROCKS!

WORDS: BETTINA RICHARDS ILLUSTRATION: CHUCK ANDERSON/NOPATTERN



Some say Chicago is the Windy City. Okay, first things first—it is *not* windy. It is damn cold at times, but not windy. It was thusly named for the blowhard politicians who took up residence here in the late 1800s. Which is odd, since Chicago is known for being a city where people don't sit around talking about what they're going to do—they just do it.

Rather than talk about what Chicago isn't, how about what it is? Sprouting up from the seeds of early industry, the Midwest's largest metropolis was fed and built by workers who came from near and far; its vast expanses of flat prairie allowed them to create numerous cities within the city. As I sit in Pilsen on the near Southside and write this, I'm surrounded by the wonders of Mexican culture: beautiful murals, amazing eats and, in the summer, wandering mariachis. Chicago also has the biggest Polish population next to Warsaw, meaning that later

I can pick up some pierogi and drift over to the Baby Doll Polka Lounge, where the over-60 set kicks up fierce accordion dance music and the moves to go with it.

In the early 1900s, the great African-American newspaper *The Chicago Defender* (the spark of the black empowerment movement) drew tons of opportunity seekers from the Deep South to Chicago; they brought with them legacies, recipes and music. Since the 1920s, the City of Big Shoulders has been famous for its great bluesmen and jazzmen, including AACM (Association for the Advancement of the Creative Musician) founder Fred Anderson and the mighty octogenarian Von Freeman. These two horn players have mentored the free jazz community for nearly 40 years. Like so many Chicagoans, they're wood-shedders, working technique and tone while searching for a new sound. They're not as

focused on taking the music somewhere as about being willing to go where the music takes them

Plenty of manufacturing goes on here—as you read this, workers at the Ferrara Pan candy company (started in 1908 by Italian immigrant Salvatore Ferrara) are breaking a sweat making Lemonheads and Red Hots. Plenty of industry has also moved away (bye, bye to most of the hog butchers!), meaning all the empty warehouses and industrial spaces not captured by loft/condo developers are ripe for artist studios, silk screening set-ups, starting record labels—and home to many a practice and performance space. Affordable space to live/play supports a vast number of labels and clubs and musicians here. The lower the overhead, the higher the creative risks you can take.

After living in Chicago for 10 years, I have not yet run out of new areas to explore. Let's go on a treasure hunt for all the Frank Lloyd Wright,

Louis Sullivan and Ludwig Mies van der Rohe works. We could bike the path along the lake all the way to Milwaukee—a trip that changes with the seasons, presenting an expanse of frozen waves and frozen flags in the winter and a paradise of boaters and birds in the summer. Let's take pictures of all the wonderful hand-painted signs on tire repair shops, barbershops and churches. Perhaps it is a sari you crave, a good curry or the delights of Ethiopia or Iran. Or we could hop on the El, throw back some soul food and explore a Southside village built as a worker's utopia by the Pullman train car company. Then again, we could just play pinball and order up a Leinenkugel from one of the members of Tortoise or Wilco who bartend at the Rainbo. I'll meet you at the corner of N. Damen and Division, okay?

*Bettina Richards*

Bettina Richards is the owner of Chicago indie powerhouse *Thrill Jockey*. [www.thrilljockey.com](http://www.thrilljockey.com)



# PITCHFORK MEDIA

Ryan Schreiber leads the online music criticism movement.

WORDS: CAMERON MACDONALD PHOTO & ILLUSTRATION: CHRIS EICHENSEER AT SOMEODDPILOT, CO.



Ryan Schreiber claims that the worst traffic in Chicago is outside his Logan Square office.

"It's probably the worst intersection in the city for driving," he explains. "It's a huge circle and the lanes are splitting off in 20 different directions. Nobody has ever seen a huge traffic circle like it anywhere so no one really knows what to do."

Logan's overly trafficked roundabout is an apt metaphor for the daily commotion of the record industry, especially since the internet blew a dam for music. And standing over that teeming circle with a fishing net is Schreiber's online music zine, Pitchfork Media. Averaging 125,000 hits a day and with its critical influence rivaling that of many print music magazines, the 10-year-old site is quickly rising to the top of the music journalism pack.

While indie rock is PFM's staple, its writers also review hip-hop, jazz, funk, electronic and experimental music, along with running features on everything from the avant-garde nature of videogame sounds to the "lost generation" of late '90s bands that critics loved but nobody heard. Matmos' Drew Daniel reviews singles, while *XLR8R*'s own Philip Sherburne writes a monthly column on techno.

Boosters laud PFM for its writers' honesty—reportedly causing some record shops to piously stock their recommendations. Haters accuse PFM of being elitists or hacks who mainly delight in watering art from the bladder.

"I think the appeal of Pitchfork is that we're not bullshitting anyone," Schreiber says. "When we love an artist, we do the best we can to evangelize them, sing their praises and hopefully get them heard by people who might share our interest in them. And when we hate an artist or a record, we're very blunt and forthcoming about that."

As for the future, Schreiber plans to bring PFM into internet radio, along with beefing up the site and organizing another large concert like last July's successful Intonation Festival at Chicago's Union Park.

"I still feel completely optimistic about the state of music and where it's headed," Schreiber declares. "I mean, there's a lot of great shit buried out there in history, but I've also heard a lot of it and don't feel the need to pore over the same records a billion times for the sake of nostalgia or some sugar-coated fictionalization of a better time."

[www.pitchforkmedia.com](http://www.pitchforkmedia.com)

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# PIT ER PAT

Magic and mystery follow Chicago's rhythmic rock ingénues around.

WORDS: VIVIAN HOST ILLUSTRATION: STRUGGLE INC.



Pit er Pat: Fay Davis-Jeffers, Rob Doran and Butchy Fuego

Pit er Pat's music achieves a strange kind of alchemy. Their new album, *Shakey*—which follows last winter's mostly instrumental "Emergency" EP (Overcoat)—pieces layers of bass, drums and keyboards into a skittering tableau that flits between post-rock, free jazz and indie rock influences without pledging allegiance to one. The effect is calming and frenetic at once, and at times somber, thanks to the plaintive vocals of keyboardist Fay Davis-Jeffers. How this bizarre rhythmic puzzle gels together is a mystery, but supernatural forces follow the band around, says bassist/vocalist Rob Doran.

"We're seeing so many weird hauntings and having different awesome experiences," Doran explains when I track the band down on tour with *Need New Body* in Texas. Pit er Pat had already run into a tow truck driver talking about

the fifth dimension and a strangely powerful museum docent when they had to stay overnight in a haunted motel room 130 miles outside of Albuquerque, New Mexico. "We rolled into this town Truth Or Consequences at three in the morning; none of the places had vacancies except for this one motel. Jamie from *Need New Body* took a shower in [his room] and then all of a sudden he was like 'Guys come here!' When you looked in the bathroom mirror it was totally fogged up, and the only thing you could see was your eyes glowing with rings around them. All three of us were looking in the mirror together and you could only see your own eyes—you couldn't see the other people at all. It was far out."

The band surmises that they are more receptive to such surreal experiences than most adults,

and this openness, this childlike sense of unlimited possibility, is reflected in their work. And not just music—all three bandmembers also make visual art (from Doran's printed materials and textiles to Davis-Jeffers' drawings and drummer/vocalist Butchy Fuego's sound installations); they say the boundary between the two activities is, more often than not, a blurry one.

More than anything, Pit er Pat is interested in immediacy, in being able to capture the feeling of an exact moment in time. Most of *Shakey* was written within a month of recording it, and the actual recording of the album only took six days. "Recording the song when it's really fresh gives it kind of an urgency," says Fuego. "It kind of comes out easier because you're not overthinking it.

[www.piterpat.com](http://www.piterpat.com), [www.thrilljockey.com](http://www.thrilljockey.com)

WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE CHICAGO INSTITUTION? **Butchy:** The AACM (Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians); **Rob:** The Mansion for Psychedelic Research and Day Spa; **Fay:** I don't like institutions.



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# RIK SHAW

This dragon DJ continues to sculpt his unique reggae party sound.

WORDS: STACEY DUGAN ILLUSTRATION: DAMON LOCKS



Many people have tried to steal the Deadly Dragon Sound System name, and a few have succeeded. But DJ Rik Shaw wants to set the record straight.

Rik Shaw, born Richard Warfield Smith, founded the DJ collective and dub night, Deadly Dragon Sound System, in 1993. Smith and four "compatriots"—John Herndon, Bundy K. Brown and Casey Rice of Tortoise, as well as a DJ by the name of Jeremy Freeman—hosted the weekly event at a shop-worn Chicago venue called the Empty Bottle, playing a unique blend of reggae classics, dancehall hits, jungle and hip-hop.

When Tortoise began demanding more of Herndon, Brown and Rice in 1998, the collective disbanded. Smith continued selecting on the Chicago circuit, holding well-attended

residencies at some of the city's most esteemed nightclubs. But Freeman moved to New York City, where he continued to play under the Deadly Dragon moniker without Smith's permission. Now, to Smith's dismay, Freeman runs a Deadly Dragon website and record store, although he's not the first to co-opt the name for his own purposes.

"Shit's gotten surreal," says Smith. "I've walked into clothing [boutiques] and seen Deadly Dragon jackets and clothing that I'm not making a cent off. I think what people really want is the Deadly Dragon vibe and that's something I hold way too tight for anyone to have."

Seated in the corner of his studio amid milk crates and shoeboxes overflowing with rare 45s and LPs, it is clear that Shaw has a lifelong

romance with the reggae, and he's intent on sharing his impeccable tastes with the masses.

"In the States, because of hip-hop culture, there's a lot of stigma placed on turntables and turntablism," says Smith. "[People] expect you to scratch or cut, because they watch MTV and this is what's projected to them. But [I've been to parties where] one dreadlock with one turntable and a microphone is just mashing it up—mashing the whole room up. For me it's purely about the vibe, which is something you're sculpting out of nothing. Every time I DJ I feel like I have to approach it in a different way, and I don't want to repeat myself. I have enough records that I don't have to do that."

Catch Rik Shaw weekly Sundays at Tomohawk at Sonotheque in Chicago.

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DEFINING THE INDUSTRY STANDARD

WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE CHICAGO INSTITUTION? **Rik Shaw:** The institute of dubology.



# BLACK MAGIC

Shellac spokesman and rock super-producer Steve Albini recalls Big Black's incendiary Chicago era.

WORDS: CAMERON MACDONALD PHOTO & ILLUSTRATION: CHRIS EICHENSEER AT SOMEODDPILOT, CO.

If '80s punk was about finding nothing sacred and everything profane, Chicago's Big Black was it. Steve Albini and Santiago Durango's guitar swordplay imitated the symphonies of the city's meatpacking houses, while bassist Dave Riley broke bones with each pluck. Their heartbeat was inhuman, with the locked rhythms of Roland drum machines igniting each salvo. And what really punctured the skin was Albini. His verses were snapshots of the Middle American wasteland: a bored slacker igniting himself for kicks, a dog trained to attack blacks, a Minnesota town running a child sex ring.

After the band ended in '87, Albini went on to form Shellac and to become one of rock's great studio engineers, leaving his fingerprints on records by Nirvana, PJ Harvey, The Pixies and countless other bands. *XLR8R* recently spoke to Albini about the Big Black era in Chicago and their 1986 classic *Atomizer*.

**Did Big Black start as a reaction against what was happening in the Chicago rock scene?**

It was more a reaction against the softer, less challenging elements of the post-punk environment (REM, The Replacements, the beginnings of the disco/dance music, etc). It was also a reaction against the conformity and simplicity—especially the simplicity of ideas—in the hardcore scene, which had become hidebound and irrelevant in a very short period of time.

**Please describe the Chicago rock scene when BB started. I read that Naked Raygun blew you away.**

Naked Raygun was one of a few bands (not just in Chicago, but anywhere) that defied easy comprehension. They were cryptic and aggressive and stylish and perverse and funny and powerful. Their music didn't seem to be "received," in the sense that it sounded like they brewed it up themselves, rather than taking it from somewhere else. I felt less compelled by their music once it crystallized into a "style," but early on they were awesome.

**As for other influences, I've read that they were heavily post-punk (Gang of Four, Wire, The Pop Group). What were the main ideas you drew from them for Big Black?**

I appreciated the abstraction they all used, and the distinct personalities implied by each unique sound. They all seemed to be out on a limb, and there was nothing conventionally "pretty" about any of them. I admired that, as a retreat into prettiness (conventionalism, I guess) is the first sign of failed ideas.

**I read that when BB started, you walked around the Northwestern campus listening to a drum machine on headphones. Out of curiosity, what were the rhythms you played?**

I was just using the machine in place of a Walkman, which I couldn't afford at the time. I appreciated the drum machine as a unique instrument. It has a capacity for things that people playing the drums can't do; uncomfortably slow or fast tempos and intricate rhythms, for example. I am sad to say that the instrument never got its due, and it was seldom used elsewhere as anything other than a metronome or drummer mimic. That's a shame.

**Looking back, what mark do you believe that the band made on Chicago's indie rock scene?**

We were part of an explosive era of growth, and I think that era is more important than any individual band. Specific to Big Black, I'd

say we were very good at keeping our band's efforts under our own control. We operated cheaply and efficiently, so we made money, and we had a self-sufficiency that many bands at the time thought was impossible. The DiY ethic was proving itself to be a tool for a viable, thriving counterculture, and we were part of it.

**Any regrets?**

I regret being duped by all the brouhaha around the Jordan Minnesota case, and I regret writing a song ("Jordan, Minnesota") about it. I bought into the conventional news media coverage like everyone else, and I was wrong. I feel quite foolish (gullible is probably a better word) for believing that there could be a large child sex ring in a small town. I wish I had seen through the obvious bullshit the prosecutor was laying down. And I hope she roasts in whatever there is for hell these days.

**What stage do you believe the band's sound evolved into during the *Atomizer* era? The record is somewhat sandwiched between hardcore punk's fascination with old-school metal and the emergence of what many would deem "college rock."**

We were determined not to sound like anyone else. Early on, Big Black incorporated my fanboy mimicry of some of my heroes (Stranglers, The Cure, Gang of Four, Killing Joke, Wire, Public Image Ltd), but by the time *Atomizer* came around, we had developed our own vocabulary and we were pretty confident.

**After *Atomizer* was released, what direction did the band go?**

We were on a trajectory, and I think we were about at the natural end of it when we recorded our last album. The only thing that bothered me toward the end of the band was that we had picked up a few hitchhiker fans that weren't there for the same reasons as us. In the beginning, anybody at one of our shows was someone I would invite into my house. I felt like the band and the audiences were basically the same kind of people. Toward the end, I felt that less and less. There were people at our shows who were there for conventional entertainment reasons, and I was put off by that. I thought the distinction between what we were doing and "entertainment" was obvious, and I was disappointed that it could be missed.

**Do you believe that Big Black could be end up as a retro favorite? Christ in a basket, I hope not. Please smother me in my sleep if that ever happens.**

Big Black's catalog is available on Touch & Go. [www.tgrec.com](http://www.tgrec.com)

A full transcript of this interview is available at [www.xlr8r.com](http://www.xlr8r.com)

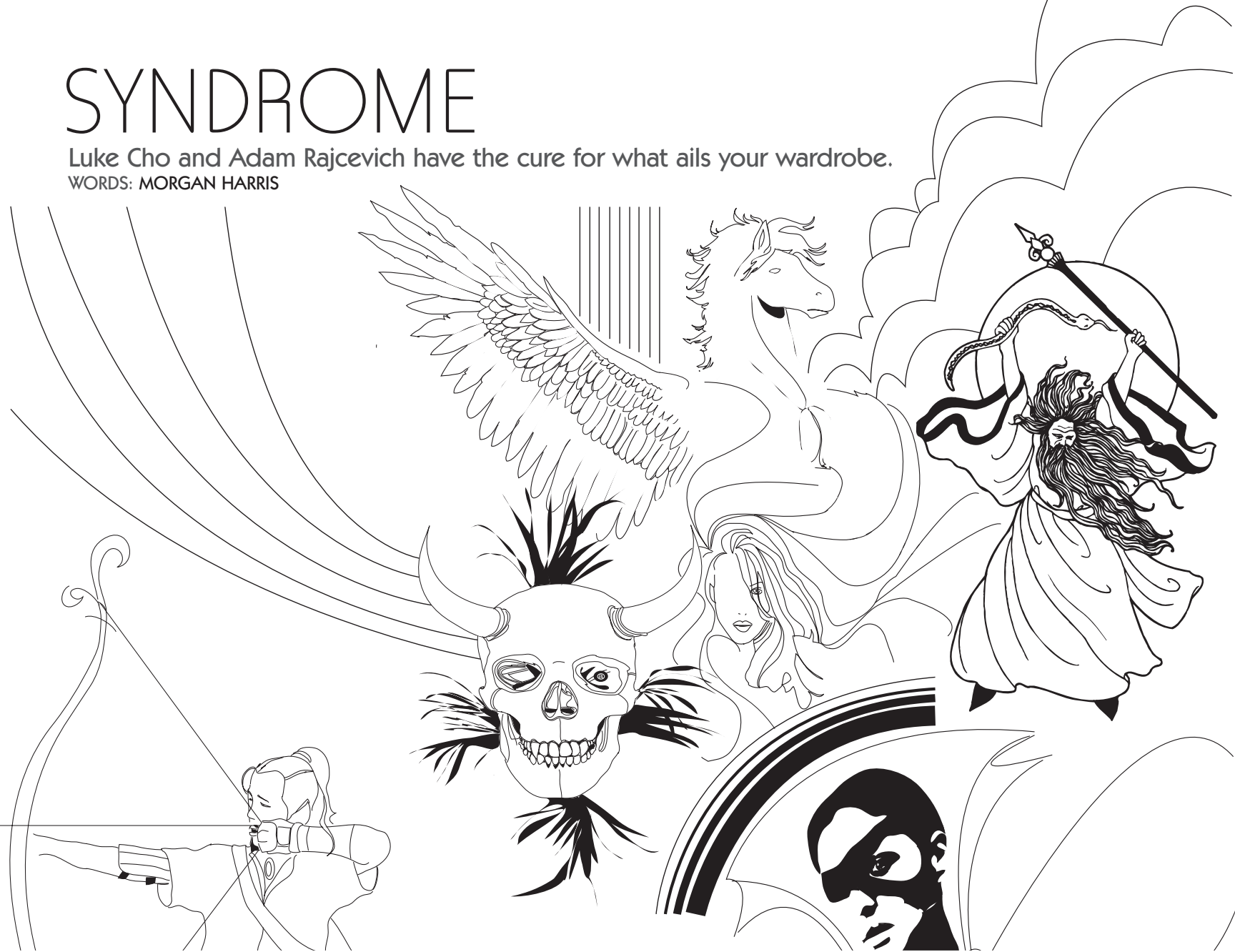




# SYNDROME

Luke Cho and Adam Rajcevic have the cure for what ails your wardrobe.

WORDS: MORGAN HARRIS



I've spent more weekends than I'd like to admit aimlessly wandering city streets, searching for the item that will both affirm my connection to and set me apart from the masses. It's part of the culture of the urban hunter/gatherer; it's as significant, in its own way, as whittling fertility figurines of soapstone may have once been.

Certain brands, once discovered, can keep you forever one-upping your friends in the cool clothing department—Syndrome is one of them. Since 2001, the Chicago-based line has been making inroads in an industry dominated by the two coasts, shocking underground fashion heads with eye-catching graphics and close attention to fit and cut. The finished products subtly speak of a commitment to keeping tongue firmly in cheek, be it through smirking slogans (tees have read "I Love You In A Real Bad Way" and "Air. Help Yourself") or color palettes chosen according to instincts rather than trend reports.

Syndrome founder Luke Cho and his right-hand man Adam Rajcevic have a full-on, vertically integrated studio set up in the River West neigh-

borhood; they're able to do everything from custom mixing screenprint colors to cutting and sewing garments from scratch. "It seems like we import everything these days," says Cho, a staunch believer in doing it yourself. "I think it's time to look for the 'Made in the USA' label and help our domestic economy." To that end, Syndrome's recent collections have used world-class Chicago designers including Creative Rescue Organization's Ray Noland, Kelly Marie Breslin (Melk) and Cody Hudson.

Even with distribution in more than 100 stores worldwide and a women's line on the way, Syndrome is still somewhat under the radar. But Rajcevic says he prefers a slow build to a meteoric rise: "We've been able to do really well [that way], whereas some brands come in real fast and die out real hard," he explains.

[www.syndrome.us](http://www.syndrome.us)

WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE CHICAGO INSTITUTION? **Luke Cho:** Untitled clothing store (I'm a part-owner) and Gramophone Records.

# DANTE CARFAGNA

A 45 collector keeps funk alive with a magic touch.

WORDS: PATRICK SISSON PHOTO: MIREYA ACIERTO



Dante Carfagna (right) with Sheer Magic's Courtland Green

A dimly lit bar tucked into a Chicago side street, Danny's Tavern normally draws a laid-back bohemian crowd. But on the first Wednesday of each month, Dante Carfagna and the Sheer Magic crew dust off some old vinyl and create a bass-heavy, funk-fueled ruckus.

"I've never considered myself a DJ," says the modest-to-a-fault Carfagna. "I have some interesting records that people want to hear, so I'm a DJ by default." Yet his sets aren't your average musical history lessons. Carfagna could be called the Indiana Jones of vinyl archeology due to the amount of rare funk and soul records he's rescued from obscurity.

The Sheer Magic nights—started in Kansas City by Carfagna's friend Courtland Green before both of them moved up to Chicago—provide the

public with a chance to sample some of the gems of Carfagna's massive collection. Though many may boast it, Sheer Magic really does play stuff that won't be heard anywhere else.

In addition to the typical record collector m.o. of scouting record fairs and gabbing with other music fans, Carfagna's passion has gotten him involved in almost every aspect of recorded music—he's a guest editor for collecting bible *Wax Poetics*, he's released instrumental hip-hop under the Express Rising moniker and he's helped put together reissue albums for labels like the Quannum-affiliated Cali-Tex. Currently, he's in the process of assembling a massive book about funk 45s with fellow record fetishist Josh Davis, better known as DJ Shadow. "Josh and I discussed the fact that some would consider this task a

lifetime's work," said Carfagna, "and here we are trying to fit it into our normal schedules."

Born in 1974 in Columbus, Ohio, Carfagna started feeding his crate-digging habit as a kid with money he made delivering newspapers. By the time he was a teenager and living in Miami, he was spinning obscure, rarified records. One day, Public Enemy's Professor Griff happened to be walking by the apartment building Carfagna was living in, and Griff was so intrigued by the music Carfagna was playing that he had to knock on the door to discover what they were (two Ruth Copeland LPs).

"It was not a snake charmer moment, though I'd like to think of it that way," says Carfagna.

[www.ohiosoulrecordings.com](http://www.ohiosoulrecordings.com)

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE CHICAGO INSTITUTION? **Dante Carfagna:** Steve Batinich, owner of the Record Dugout.



# PELICAN

Chicago band Pelican marches heavy metal into the new millennium.

WORDS: STACEY DUGAN



Pelican: Trevor DeBrau, Larry Herweg, Bryan Herweg and Laurent Lebec

Lets get this out of the way: Pelican is a heavy metal band without a singer.

This has prompted journalists to create clever labels like “instrumental” to describe them—and while such words aptly acknowledge broad themes in the music, they overlook the unique and defining characteristics of this band.

Pelican *does* subscribe to the high-decibel, aggressive performance ethos of the heavy metal canon, but the band members also concern themselves with structural concepts atypical to much contemporary music in general—like orchestral composition. The band’s two lead guitarists (Laurent Lebec and Trevor de Brauw) employ varied harmonic techniques, while the group’s non-standard song structure yields 10-minute tracks that are astoundingly intricate tapestries of sound.

But in the beginning Pelican was just a grind-core band, only it went by the name of Tusk. Lebec, de Brauw and drummer Larry Herweg met in 1996, while Lebec was an undergrad at Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois. All three were involved in the punk and hardcore scene and had similar influences, so it wasn’t long before Tusk was born. Independently, Lebec began writing acoustic songs of a very different nature, and although his bandmates showed enthusiasm for the new music, it didn’t really fit with Tusk’s style. So they formed a new band, Pelican, and invited Herweg’s brother Bryan to join them as their bassist.

“At first I think that there was definitely an affinity with Isis and bands that are heavier but slower and have a more plodding nature to them,” Lebec says. “I think that as time went by

we ended up going further back in time for the inspiration that’s moving us now.”

Now, with the release of their second full-length, *The Fire in Our Throats Will Beckon the Thaw* (Hydra Head)—which is not as categorically heavy as their 2003 debut, *Australasia*—Pelican is steadily accruing a base of fans from across music genres.

“We noticed right away, even playing in Chicago, that a really wide variety of people were coming—it wasn’t all metal heads,” says Lebec, happy that Pelican has avoided being pigeon-holed. “Now that people have so many options for downloading music you’re really aware, as a band, that how you get categorized really has a repercussion on how your music will be interpreted by people who aren’t familiar with it. Especially as an instrumental band.”

[www.hydrahead.com](http://www.hydrahead.com)

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WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE CHICAGO INSTITUTION? **Laurent Lebec:** The lake.



# MARC HELLNER

Pulseprogramming's heartbeat goes solo.

WORDS: MARK PYTLIK



Few North American cities can cop to having a musical support system like Chicago's. Just ask Marc Hellner, a wandering solo artist who's made a career out of collaborating with the city's numerous fireflies. Formerly of L'Altra, and one of the founding members of the waylaid Pulseprogramming, Hellner's currently preparing for the release of his new full-length *Marriages* (Peacefrog), which—despite being a solo record—relies heavily on collaborations with members of bands like Tortoise and Telefon Tel Aviv. “There's a lot of musicians on it from the jazz scene around here,” he says. “It's a little more composition-oriented. I wrote string arrangements, so it's much more live and string-oriented, but there's a lot of programming and processing as well. If you're familiar with the Pulse stuff, you'll hear a bit of that in it.”

Indeed, *Marriages* might be the closest we get to a proper Pulseprogramming follow-up for quite some time. Although the Aesthetics label is releasing a remix record (with contributions from Nudge, Laub and Ghislain Poirer) this month, Hellner says the multimedia collective has been on hold for a couple of years now with no immediate reunion in sight. “We're not completely finished but we're not working together, and we haven't since [2003's] *Tulsa For One Second*,” he says. “Everyone's doing their own thing. It was a collaborative group and my own work kind of took over.”

In keeping with his contemporaries' herculean output levels, Hellner's got a number of other plates in the air. In addition to assembling a touring band for an imminent *Marriages* tour, he's recording with a local classical pianist, engineering a solo album for L'Altra's Lindsay Anderson and working on another solo record of contemporary classical string music. It's an energy and work ethic that the former Oregonian attributes to his current surroundings. “Oregon is really beautiful, but it's a bit sleepy and hard to get things done. In Chicago, there's a wide-ranging, hard-working array of musicians and talent and labels. It's really unique in that you can just ask people to play and they'll play. It's not competitive like other cities can be.”

[www.peacefrog.com](http://www.peacefrog.com), [www.aesthetics-usa.com](http://www.aesthetics-usa.com)

**WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE CHICAGO INSTITUTION?** **Mark Hellner:** Millenium Park. It's a big beautiful park in the middle of downtown on the lake, with a pavilion designed by Frank Gehry.

# KONCEPT AND MEIOTIC

Two promoters make sure techno has a home in House City.

WORDS: TOMAS PALERMO PHOTO: AUBREY EDWARDS



Marc Martin (middle left) and George Moreira (middle right) with friends Albert and Matthew

Frankie Knuckles and Marshall Jefferson. Green Velvet and DJ Heather. Trax and Dust Traxx. If you like electronic music and didn't know that Chicago is House City you've been living under a rock or had amnesia for the past 20 years. But Ol' Mama Disco begat two children to the modern dance era: house *and* techno. While the latter is more commonly associated with the city of Detroit, the entire Midwest shares a passion for pounding drums, and Chi-town is no exception.

For the past six years, two Windy City club production pillars have made sure the techno scene is properly represented: Koncept Promo's George Moreira and Meiotic's Marc Martin. But how easy is it to promote techno in such a house- and hip-hop-dominated city? “We have a very strong, loyal fan base,” says Moreira. “That's something we're very grateful for.” Martin concurs: “[Compared]

to the respective scenes throughout the United States, [it's not out of line to say] that Chicago's got one of the strongest communities Stateside.”

The communal strength is reflected in Koncept and Meiotic's close working relationship. The two run the bi-monthly Your Formula Life event at Tini Martini, which has featured DJs like Todd Sines, DJ Shift and bootymaster DJ Funk. And the word has spread far and wide. “We have kids regularly coming in from Iowa, Wisconsin and Detroit to check out our events,” beams Moreira.

“It does seem like more electronic music enthusiasts—be it house, IDM or even the new dance rock kids—are discovering techno/house tracks,” says Martin of the music's expanding fanbase. “People are finding out that these Kompakt, Perlon, Playhouse, Spectral and UR tracks are beautiful...I love that!”

**WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE CHICAGO INSTITUTION?** **George Moreira:** Barney's one-stop, Ray Barney's record store and the headquarters for his legendary label, Dance Mania.; **Marc Martin:** Chicago loft parties and Harold's Chicken Shack.

Koncept and Meiotic's strong community has also helped them weather the ups and downs of nightlife—from The Station fire disaster in February 2003 that killed 21 people to 9/11's effects on booking DJs to more mundane things. “We booked amazing three-deck DJ Cristian Varela from Spain [and he] became friendly with the club's attractive bartender, who challenged him to keep up with her in the shot department,” relates Moreira. “When it was his turn to get on the decks, he played three records, [threw up] and proceeded to fall in and out of consciousness. We laughed about it after, but quite a few fans were left disappointed.”

The disappointment doesn't seem to last long with their audiences. “Our crowd is so damn supportive,” explains Martin. “It's [that] Midwestern soul—Chicago gets down!”

[www.konceptpromo.com](http://www.konceptpromo.com), [www.meioticpromotions.com](http://www.meioticpromotions.com)



# CHOCOLATE INDUSTRIES

Off-kilter rhythms find kindred spirits at label owner Seven's eclectic imprint.

WORDS: MARK PYTLIK



An old Polaroid from the Chocolate Industries vaults. Seven had just had belts custom-made for himself and artists on the label.

IDM kids think of Chocolate Industries as one of glitch-hop's first homes, indie hip-hop heads rate it for bridging the styles between Warp and Def Jux and crate diggers know it as the label that recently reissued McNeal & Niles' 1979 pearl, *Thrust*. But ask CI founder Seven for the parameters of his label and he'll come up one buzz phrase short. "I think at one point people were able to link what was on the label aesthetically," he says. "But for me now, I guess it's all linked by emotion."

Glitch-hop, hip-hop, digital soul, dusty groove—over the course of Chocolate's six-plus years, Seven's touched 'em all. Spun out of Miami imprint Schematic Records in 1998 and relocated to Chicago late the following year, Chocolate insinuated itself into backpacks everywhere with

instrumental electronic music from outfits like East Flatbush Project and Push Button Objects and the digitally contoured hip-hop of Chicago rhymesayer Diverse and the *Urban Renewal Program* series.

But for every straight-up electronic or hip-hop record in its discography, there's another that's more difficult to categorize, like Caural's organic, post-rock clatter, Via Tania's refracted nu-soul or Ghislain Poirier's off-kilter, syncopated cut-up act. In the course of cataloguing Seven's passions, sometimes the label even taps into something bigger. "The Neptunes' production now is kinda no different than what we were doing back [in 2001]," he observes. "It's just more geared towards the commercial [market]. That said, there are a lot of people that were making an identical kind of

music in different parts of the country that we never knew about. Three Six Mafia was doing shit in '94 that Prefuse is doing now!"

With a new label manager affording him the opportunity to focus solely on the creative side of the business, Seven is working on a project with London's Lady Sovereign and prepping new releases from Diverse, Poirer, Tania, Scott Herren (as Piano Overlord) and Cannibal Ox alum Vast Aire. Also in the works, alongside fellow Chicagoan Dante Carfagna, is *Personal Space*, a collection of black electronic music from the '60s and '70s. "It's urban archeology," he says. "No one even knows about it. Some of it sounds like Aphex Twin could've made it, some of it sounds like Andre 3000."

[www.chocolateindustries.com](http://www.chocolateindustries.com)

# CODY HUDSON

This prolific artist creates things that make you go hmmm.

WORDS: BEN FASMAN PHOTO: CHRIS EICHENSEER AT SOMEODDPILOT, CO.



In the ever-growing pool of "street" artists making names for themselves, it's hard to stay ahead of the curve. It's even harder when you're not on either coast. "I like the fact that things here are a bit slower paced and everything isn't so overhyped," says Midwest design champion Cody Hudson. "Chicago allows me to focus more on the work and less on all the social scene stuff that surrounds us."

Focused is just what Hudson's hustle has become. With his ubiquitous design company, Struggle Inc., Cody continues to work for Chocolate Industries (he's the unofficial art director of the Chicago label) and is currently designing a series of books for graffiti magazine *12 Oz. Prophet*, all the while churning out hot graphics for Burton, Gravis and a host of others. More importantly, this past year has seen Hudson's painting career take off with solo shows in Chicago, San Diego, Los Angeles, New York and one in Paris scheduled for November.

In terms of both his design and personal work, you're as likely to find him influenced by BDP and Ghostface as Milton Glaser or Paul

Rand. "As far as music, if you look deep, what I've been listening to always translates into the painting," he asserts. "It's almost like a form of sampling because a lot of the stuff I do is based off of music lyrics or song titles. I like taking an interpretation of a lyric or a lyric [itself] and changing the context and putting it on a piece of art and having people wonder, 'What is that from?' or 'What is he trying to say?' and it'll all go back to that song." Whether it's a quote from a song, an arched swath of color cutting across a wooden canvas, or a hilarious conversation between talking bottles, Hudson's work always manages to draw some sort of emotional reaction, while simultaneously being visually appealing to even the most shrewd design heads.

"I think people appreciate that the work is coming from here so they want to support it," says Hudson of the art coming out of Chicago right now. According to the trajectory of his career, he may just be the living proof of that.

[www.struggleinc.com](http://www.struggleinc.com)

**WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE CHICAGO INSTITUTION?** **Seven:** Humble Park. It represents every place I've grown up. Living in the Bronx, Haiti and Miami, I always grew up around Puerto Ricans, Cubans, Haitians, Jamaicans—it's good to be in a neighborhood where that's around you.

**WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE CHICAGO INSTITUTION?** **Cody Hudson:** Hip-house, hot dogs and Old Style beer.



# SONOTHEQUE

This Chicago club boasts more than just a monster soundsystem.

WORDS: JOSHUA P. FERGUSON PHOTO: MATTHEW TAPLINGER



It doesn't take long to realize that Joe Bryl is a seasoned veteran of the Chicago music scene. Having divvied up the last 25 years working with many of Chicago's premier night spots, he now has a new home at Sonotheque, a Chicago lounge that boasts line-ups as diverse as Lady Sovereign, Marcus Intalex and DJ Spinna in the same weekend.

The brainchild of Bryl and partners Donnie Madia and Terry Alexander, the now three-year-old venue was born out of a desire to have more control over a club of their own. "We did the [construction of the space] according to our needs, which were to make it a great place for listening...[and to have something] that reflected our own aesthetics,"

explains Bryl. "It's a really great sounding room, and most DJs who come here are really amazed at how much thought and effort has gone into the process."

Sonotheque's formula is a fluid one, equal parts musical ingenuity and positive vibrations at a reasonable price. "It's an ongoing project," explains Bryl of the space and its programming. "Before it had more of a *Straight No Chaser*-magazine vibe, and there were only six or seven DJs or collaborators. It's transformed from that into a space that has 25 different events a month."

Sonotheque's diverse amalgam of sound ranges from DJ Rik Shaw's Jamaican music night Cool & Deadly Digital to Bombay Beat

Box, an Asian and world music night sponsored by Six Degrees Records. Bass By The Pound drops drum & bass there, Chicago DJs Ron Trent and Anthony Nicholson throw down house vibrations and internationally-known names like Aesop Rock, Diplo, DJ Premier, Kyoto Jazz Massive and Quantic have all graced the stage. Bryl says the vibe of the venue has just as much to do with the artists who roll through as it does the lights, sound and décor. "There are always those types of people who we work with locally and globally who give accent to what we're doing here," he declares.

[www.sonotheque.net](http://www.sonotheque.net)

**WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE CHICAGO INSTITUTION?** Joe Bryl: Joe Shanahan over at The Metro because he's been doing it for 25 years, and I've always been impressed with the people at the Green Mill.

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10/19-Chapel Hill, NC  
10/20-Atlanta, GA  
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11/5-Portland, OR  
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# LUMPEN

An arts agitator goes to work for America's ignored proles.  
WORDS: SCOTT THILL



Some people turn off the television in disgust, bitch about it for hours on end, then turn it right back on again. Ed Marszewski, the mover behind the Lumpen Media Group's outstanding muckraking, does something about it. For 15 years solid, Lumpen has dedicated itself to speaking truth to power, and it's armed itself with a variety of imaginative ways to do it, including the long-running magazine of the same name, a gripload of video and art festivals, DVD and CD compilations from its own Lumptronic label and much more. The Lumpen faithful are antsy activists, and they're not afraid to call bullshit on what they see as a world crawling slowly toward conformity.

"We believe what A.J. Liebling said, 'Freedom

of the press belongs to those who own one,'" explains Marszewski. "And it's a good thing we do—we're using it to defeat mediocrity in all of its forms while celebrating the vibrancy of emerging cultures. Our projects seek to widen the discourse and explore new cultural forms."

They've done that specifically by launching some of the city's most compelling thought-swaps, including the Select Media and Version Convergence festivals—the former interrogates the interdisciplinary uses (and abuses) of technology, while the latter promotes the work of local media artists not yet immortalized in Chicago's Museum of Contemporary Art.

More importantly, Lumpen has planted their progressive flag in the community by creating



the aptly named cultural center Buddy (although the name is scheduled for a change). The facility, located on N. Milwaukee Avenue, is equal parts gallery, social space and party central for the various artists and activists who meet there. All of which brings new meaning to Carl Sandburg's City of Big Shoulders.

"Chicago is the best place to be 10 years ago and right now," enthuses Marszewski. "The countercultures are thriving, and the attitude and generosity of its inhabitants keeps us endlessly charged, inspired and active. Our goal is to highlight the real shit happening in town and abroad, and reject the corporate hype and propaganda machines defining culture for us."

[www.lumpen.com](http://www.lumpen.com)

WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE CHICAGO INSTITUTION? **Ed Marszewski:** Highschool, Heaven gallery and Buddy—three spaces that are connected physically to each other. Without this configuration I would never have been able to do those aforementioned festivals.

# DANNY THE WILDCHILD & PHANTOM 45

Serious d&b DJs who don't take themselves too seriously.  
WORDS: VIVIAN HOST PHOTO: MIREYA ACIERTO



Danny the Wildchild and Phantom 45

Phantom 45 (Brian Sarpalius) and Danny The Wildchild (Daniel Garcia) are both in love with Maxwell Street Polish. "It's our equivalent to Philly's cheesesteak spots like Pat's and Geno's," explains Danny of the sausage stand. "It's all outdoors. People are there at five or six in the morning, eating on top of their cars." It's not surprising the pair frequent Maxwell's—it espouses many of the values they hold dear: it's unpretentious, it's fun and it stays up all night long.

Phantom and Danny have been nearly inseparable since they met in 1992 at Hot Jams. Phantom, who was doing the ordering for the record store, turned Danny, an avid turntablist, onto the breakbeat hardcore sounds coming from UK acts like Acen and 2 Bad Mice—both were instantly smitten by the so-called 'ardkore sound (drum & bass's predecessor). When the Chicago drum & bass scene blew up in 1994—with warehouse parties like Ripe drawing 2,000 to 4,000 champagne-swilling, lighter-waving ravers per weekend—Danny and Phantom were playing nearly every event.

Though US rave fever has cooled considerably, the duo still plays around the country regularly. Their styles complement each other—both play dance-

floor-ready tracks from the likes of True Playaz and Ram Records, but where Phantom goes with smooth, house-style mixing, Danny layers fierce scratch routines over the beats. "You see DJs and they're a dime a dozen," declares Danny. "They're smoking a cigarette, talking to someone in the booth—it's really not exciting. Even if there's a little string breakdown, I tend to add scratches to it to let [the crowd] know that I'm behind the decks and I'm ready."

Those who know Phantom and Danny know that mixing is about the only thing they take seriously. Phantom is known for his Southside Chicago pride and his fondness for Mexican beer, while Danny's famous for his easy laugh and his fondness for the sticky greens.

Not surprisingly, these jokesters say that they have never had a fight with each other; in fact, they've learned a lot from hanging out. "Brian has taught me how to have fun on the road," says Danny. "From Danny, I've learned that you should put a towel underneath the hotel door if you're going to be smoking," adds Brian. "And also a shower cap goes right over the smoke detector."

WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE CHICAGO INSTITUTION? **Danny The Wildchild:** Comiskey Park, home of the White Sox. **Phantom 45:** Maxwell Street Polish, right off the Kennedy Expressway; 24 hours a day Polish sausage and pork chop sandwiches.



# AFRICA HI-FI

Ron Trent's Afrobeat monthly seeks to educate and elevate.  
 WORDS: JOSHUA P. FERGUSON ILLUSTRATION: RAY NOLAND



Ron Trent recently relocated back to his hometown of Chicago after absorbing the New York City music scene for the past several years. Upon his return, Trent immediately set to the task of applying the Big Apple's enthusiasm to a club night of his own. "My whole thing was to come back to Chicago and bring that energy back home," explains Trent. With the help of his partner, the beautiful and entrepreneurial Sonia Hassan, Trent created Africa Hi-Fi, a third-Friday-of-the-month party that explores African-influenced dance music.

While African music became more visible after Fela Kuti's passing, Hassan stresses that Africa Hi-Fi is not just an Afrobeat party. "The

concept of the night is that we pay respect to Africa as a mother, we pay respect to Africa as a culture and an influence to music in general," she says.

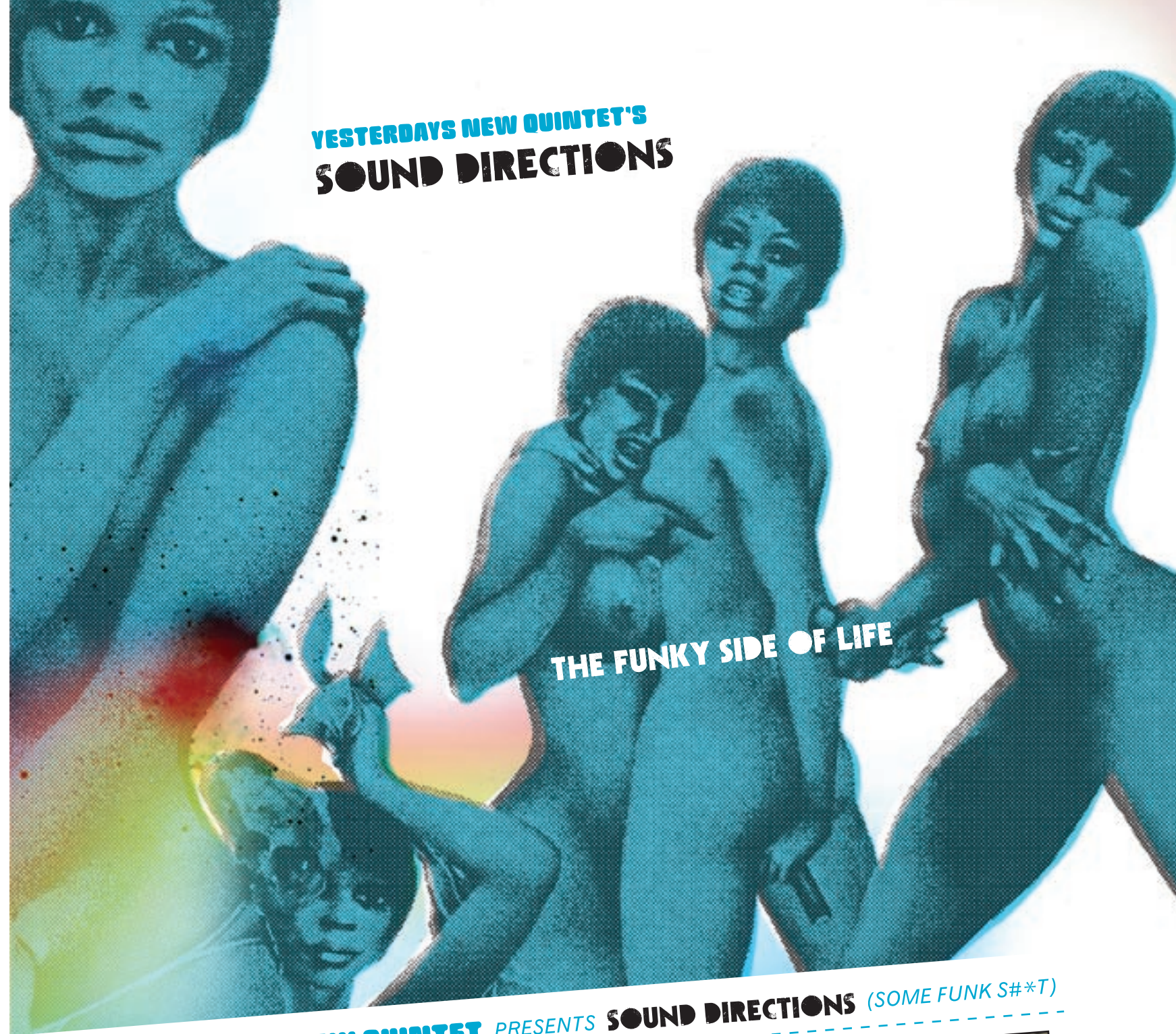
In addition to raising funds for Next Aid, an AIDS orphan charity operating in South Africa, Africa Hi-Fi's purpose is to bring conscious people together: "We're using music to build consciousness from a visible aspect as well as an audible aspect," says Trent. "Make them feel good, leave an impression and while you have their attention give 'em a little education." Hassan adds: "We're bringing together house heads, hip-hop heads, jazz heads, whatever. Being able to bring all those

people together, all races, all ages too—we have a range from, like, 21-year-olds to people 50-55 and that's beautiful. How wonderful is it that you can have a 21-year-old and a 70-year old together listening to the same music and enjoying it and vibing off it together? When these people come and they realize that they can be in the same room together and enjoy the same things together it breaches the spectrum of race, religion and identity—it speaks more than just music."

"We're building our own world basically," Trent reckons. And what a sweet world it is.

[www.prescriptionworld.org](http://www.prescriptionworld.org)

WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE CHICAGO INSTITUTION? **Ron Trent:** My home and my records.



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# PUMP IT, WORK IT

DJ Funk talks about ghetto house...and super coochie.

WORDS: VIVIAN HOST PHOTO: AUBREY EDWARDS

Before ghetto tech and Lil' Jon and juke, there was ghetto house. Originating on the predominately black Westside and Southside of Chicago, the music jacked house, added even lower 808s and 909s to it, then commanded the dancefloor to "Pump it," "Work it" and other, dirtier things. DJ Funk (born Charles Chambers) has been at the center of this maelstrom since day one, releasing for Dance Mania and his own Funk Records imprint. His music—along with that of cohorts like Deeon, Sluggo and Milton—spread like a virus from booty clubs to Midwest raves, and eventually overseas, with Basement Jaxx commissioning remixes and European promoters knocking at the door. We recently tracked down the elusive DJ Funk and asked him to tell us a ghetto house story.

[www.djfunk.net](http://www.djfunk.net)

"[I grew up] on the Westside of Chicago. A ghetto, hardcore, rough neighborhood. [In Chicago], black folks stay out on the Westside, the Southside, the hundreds and the suburbs. When I was 12, I used to DJ with 8-tracks and old-school record players that didn't even have pitches or anything, but I used to put tapes together. You could use the pause button on cassette players and get an edit just like in a professional studio. It was shitty but my heart was there.

"[When I was DJing], I was behind a hip-hop group called Do Or Die—they was with Tung Twista when their first album came out. I was the DJ of the group but when they got signed I didn't want to do hip-hop because I saw where it was going. I sat down and thought to myself 'Which way do you really want to go if you're successful?' And I was like 'I can't really do hip-hop because I don't really want to hang out at bars and still be getting shot up.' Instead, I [would rather] go out to a booty club and see nice, hot, sexy, beautiful women shaking that ass.

"Ghetto house started at this club called The Factory with me, Jammin Gerald and Houz' Mon. We didn't have a record deal at the time so we used 4-tracks, drum machines and samplers live. I saw that people really loved when the tracks was really simple and broke down. They went crazy—lots of sexual energy! So I started to make mixtapes and CDs. [Me and the other ghetto house guys] Deeon, Sluggo, Milton all met through Ray Barney [from Dance Mania]. Then we started hooking up on our own doing mixtapes and records. One place [you could always find all the ghetto DJs] was [his record store], Barney's Records.

"When I was coming up, I admired guys like Lil' Louis and Farley [Jackmaster Funk]. [House and hip-house] was a phenomenon. It was the shit! When the ghetto house came along black folks would listen to it but they would never listen to the techno stuff. The only way it ever came through the hood was with the lyrics, 'cos people really like you to tell them what to do. If you at a party and you say 'Shake that ass, bitch!' You know...motherfuckers gotta shake that ass!! And the techno stuff, for black folks,

it's not enough words. They don't know what to do to the music.

"[As far as the lyrics being offensive], some of these records are made for certain women. Certain women are hoes. But everybody not a ho. That's just how we party at our house—if you want to come and join us then you welcome to. As far as me, I can call a girl a bitch on that DJ Funk shit and get away with it. I use it all the way up; I ain't even gonna front. But I don't try to diss women, I just talk from where I came and how I feel. I love women.

"What kind of girls I like? *Awww* shit! All of them. I started DJing so I could get girls. I wanted to get with black girls, white girls, Asian girls. I was just kind of wondering how the coochie was. And actually, it ain't that much different. I thought I was onto something. I thought it was like, if I had an Asian girl it would have been some exotic coochie. Some sparks and a cape would have been like...super coochie. But it was just regular old good coochie. Some women are really freaky, and some are not. I just really like beautiful, sexy, gorgeous women. You see them at raves too....they might have big pants on but they still look cute. And when they take them big pants off, that ass drop like *Pow!*

"If I was doing the music for the money, I would have been out the game 'cos it's not like I'm rich. I don't trip so much on the music getting out. The music is for free. The music is for people to enjoy themselves and have a good time. I just got to make sure that I can eat. And that's why [the scene fell apart]! 'Cos we ain't fucking get no fucking money off the shit! All of us has basically been dealing with shitty labels and it don't encourage you to make new music.

"I've been out of tune for the last few years. I had a real bad relationship and it went off into my music and my friendships. But the last six months I've been getting back out. I just finished my new album and all I got to do is negotiate a distribution deal. There's a new Chicago sound that came out called juke. It's just like the stuff that we did but it's more 808 bass-y. It's really more ghetto. I don't think its really going to pop off really popular because they're not really riding on a 4/4 beat real hard—it's way more like hip-hop. I'm combining the juke sound with the ghetto house sound.

"[As far as my DJ Funk hat], hell yeah I still have it! And I'm getting it fixed and I'm starting to wear it in a minute. That was a hood hat, for real. Some of my rhinestones fell off but that's alright. I'll get me a couple of bucks and some glue."





# THE ETERNALS

Sonic manipulators jack into the outer limits of sound.

WORDS: SCOTT THILL ILLUSTRATION: DAMON LOCKS



Damon Locks and Wayne Montana spent the '90s in the underrated Trenchmouth, helping push the post-rock juggernaut built by pals like Tortoise and others forward into the new millennium. So far, they've spent the 21st century tearing down cozy genre classifications altogether as the brains behind The Eternals.

"By the time Trenchmouth finished," confesses Locks, "we had already become disinterested in playing rock-based music. When The Eternals started, it was our chance to create something different, something we had not heard before."

Montana agrees. "Concepts of sound manipulation and arrangement needed to change. So we changed them for ourselves."

That's for sure. So far, The Eternals have released two mind-fucking full-lengths—including their palindrome-rich 2004 effort *Rawar Style*—as well as a flurry of singles on outer-sound giant Thrill Jockey. Up next is an

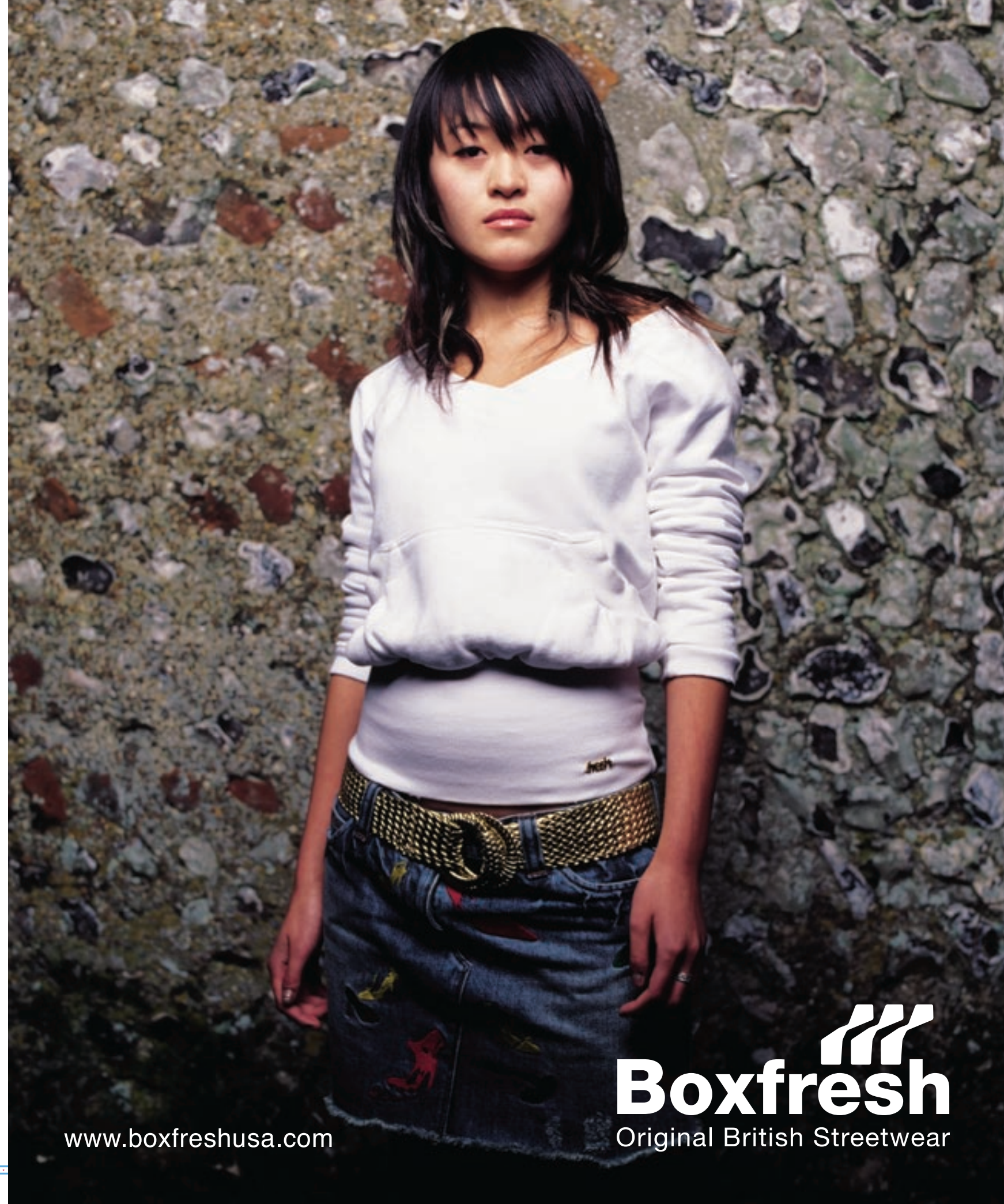
international tour (including a coveted slot on the All Tomorrow's Parties' UK installment), a remix EP featuring badasses like Prefuse 73 and A Grape Dope and a new full-length, not to mention a new 7" courtesy of Gold Standard Labs, the Cali-based indie label started by Mars Volta's Omar Rodriguez-Lopez.

The incest of the whole thing is enough to make you sweat, but that's the way Locks and Montana like it. They've got friends left and right in Chicago's insanely fertile experimental scene, and they've got nothing but love for them all.

"Chicago is definitely the brain-drain of the Midwest," explains Locks. "The best from all around end up here, and I try to interact with every last one of them. The musicians I've met from Chicago have a hard-working aesthetic like no other."

[www.aesthetics-usa.com](http://www.aesthetics-usa.com)

**WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE CHICAGO INSTITUTION?** **Wayne Montana:** All the great cheap restaurants: Hot Doug's, El Patosi, Jim's Grill, Furama, Matsuya, Lula, Rodan, Podalahnka **Damon Locks:** The Gene Siskel Theatre, The Logan Theatre (our second run theatre) and Hi Fi Records on Clark Street.



[www.boxfreshusa.com](http://www.boxfreshusa.com)

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# GRAMAPHONE RECORDS

Chicago's vinyl mecca is still standing strong.

WORDS: MAX HERMAN PHOTOS: MIREYA ACIERTO



Longevity. No word better describes Gramophone Records, which has been selling quality vinyl on Chicago's Northside since 1969. The store has embraced the city's love of jazz and blues and has played an integral part in the explosion of house and hip-hop music thereafter. And even with vinyl sales steadily declining these days, 12" records remain the store's staple product. "We'll stick with it as long as we can and it'll be probably be 2020 in Gramophone and you'll still see a majority of vinyl," says store manager Andy Moy, who's been with the outfit since 1984.

While Gramophone has recently moved a few blocks north of its original location to a more spacious site at 2843 N. Clark, the

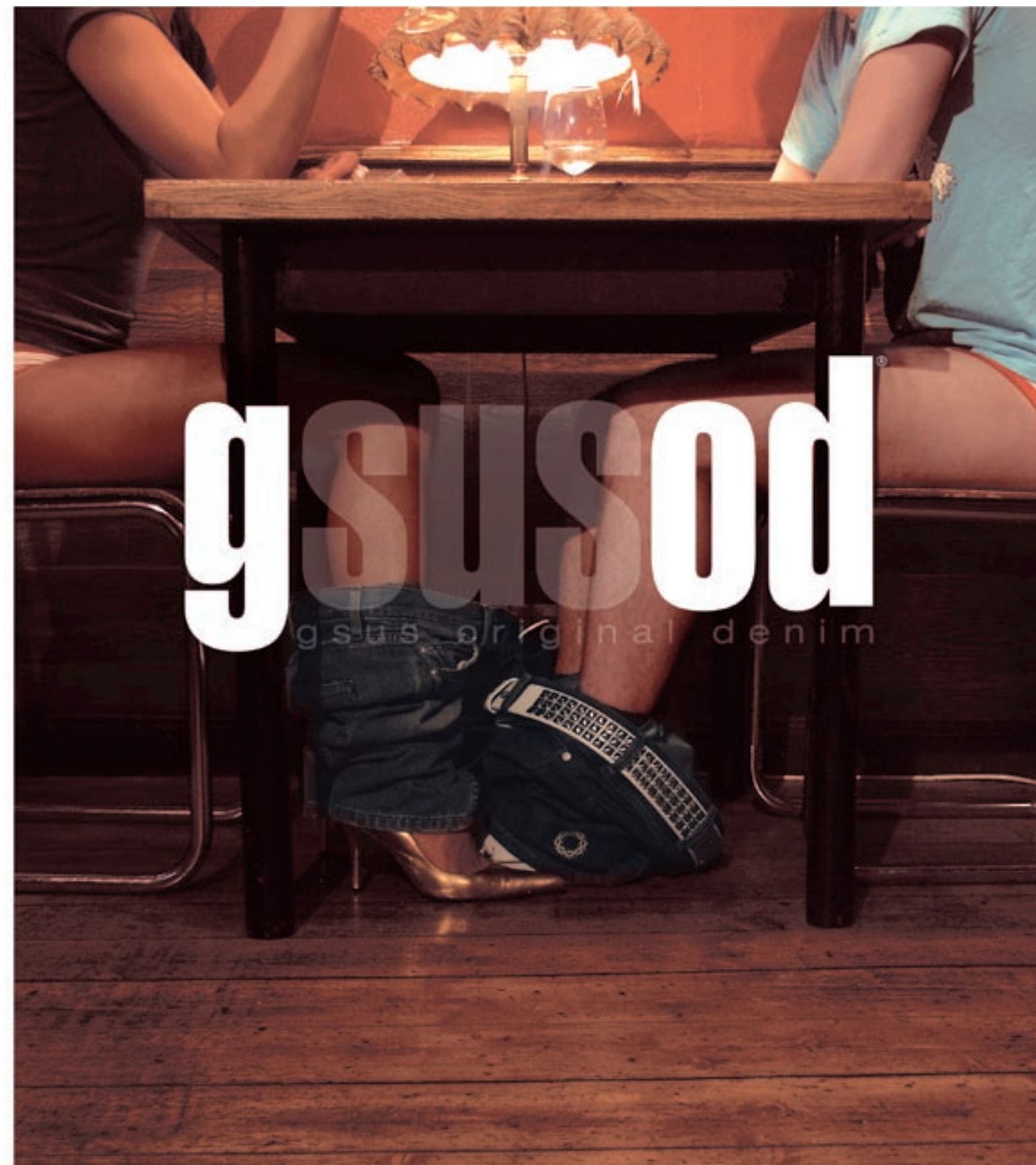
essence of the store hasn't changed a bit. "It's a meeting place, kind of like the barbershop," says Moy. "You have everybody in the music business coming over to meet people, give each other a hug, ask them what's going on this week, what's happening. And that's what the store is all about: it's a community. That's what we've always billed the store as—35 years later it still has the same feeling."

The barbershop-like atmosphere has attracted world-renowned talent over the years—both workers (e.g. Derrick Carter and DJ PNS) and shoppers (e.g. Daft Punk and Paul Oakenfold). Moy, who introduced house music to the store, cites the arrival of Derrick Carter as helping spark this phenomenon. "In

this business you meet people who come and go, but people like him—this man had music in his blood, just pouring out of his pores," says Moy. "And I recognized it right away."

Reaching out to up-and-coming talent has been a regular occurrence with the Gramophone family, whether it's employing well-known DJs or stocking albums from an unsigned act. "We like to try to make artists out of whoever we can," says Moy. "You got talent? It's our job to try to get you up there. 'Cause that's what the music business or any art is all about. And that's what we pride ourselves on."

[www.gramophonerecords.com](http://www.gramophonerecords.com)



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**JESSICA HOPPER, 29**  
Zine publisher, writer, publicist, artist, feminist

**One article of clothing you can't live without:** My sleeveless Vision Street Wear shirt held together by safety pins. I bought it off a kid for \$6 at a show in 2001.

**Style icon:** Nancy Reagan

**What were you listening to when you put on this outfit?** The songs I have to learn to play for the Nedelle tour.

**Besides yourself, who is the most stylish person in Chicago?** I would be bummed if I was Chicago's most anything. Mayor Daley, he is working some hot-to-death business casual these days.

Jessica's bloggerstein: [tiny.abstracodynamics.org](http://tiny.abstracodynamics.org)

# GOOD LOOKS

Eight of Chicago's most intriguing people discuss style.

PHOTOS: MIREYA ACIERTO, DAVID BLACK (JC GABEL),  
CHRISTOPHER WOODCOCK (MATT CLARK)

ILLUSTRATION: NIGEL DENNIS [WWW.ELECTRICHEAT.ORG](http://WWW.ELECTRICHEAT.ORG)



**VAKILL, ageless**

Flagship MC for hip-hop crew The Molemen

**One article of clothing you can't live without:** I couldn't do without a crispy pair of Jordans.

**Style icon:** Big Daddy Kane; I have never seen BDK bumming. He always has something brand new or custom made.

**What were you listening to when you put on this outfit?** Actually, I was listening to my album, *Worst Fears Confirmed*.

**Besides yourself, who is the most stylish person in Chicago?** That's a tough one because everyone is their own island with their style. Maybe R. Kelly.

[www.molemen.com](http://www.molemen.com)





**AMY SCHROEDER, 29**  
 Editor & Publisher of *Venus Magazine*

**ANNA JOYCE, 28**  
 Fashion editor at *Venus* and a designer of one-of-a-kind tops and home accessories

**One article of clothing you can't live without:**  
 Amy: Flip-flops—I have loads of them; Anna: My wedding rings

**Style icon:** Amy: Gloria Steinem; Anna: My dad—he was the most incredible thrift shopper I have ever known. His scores are legendary.

**What were you listening to when you put on this outfit?** Amy: Electrelane; Anna: Stevie Wonder

**Besides yourself, who is the most stylish person in Chicago?** Amy & Anna: Becca Mann, our other fashion editor. She's a natural beauty and she always looks comfortable, even if she's wearing heels and tight jeans. That girl can rock a pair of vintage heels like you have never seen.

[www.venuszine.com](http://www.venuszine.com), [www.annajoycedesign.com](http://www.annajoycedesign.com)



**J.C. GABEL, 29**  
 Editor-in-Chief of *Stop Smiling*

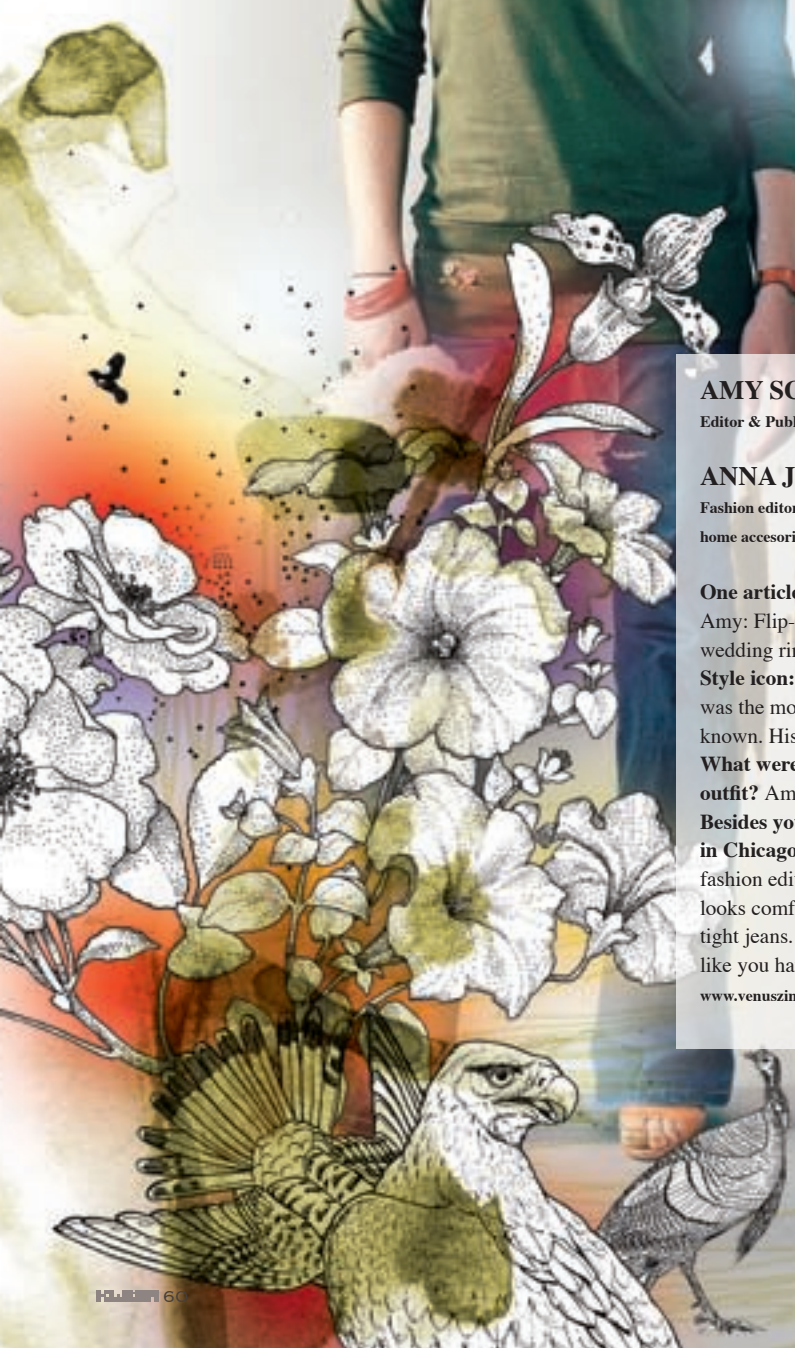
**One article of clothing you can't live without:** My boxer shorts—then at least I can keep working no matter who is around.

**Style icon:** Is this a trick question?

**What were you listening to when you put on this outfit?** Right now I'm listening to the Neil Young *Decade* collection, the new Super Furry Animals, the Baby Huey reissue, the Les McCann and Eddie Harris *Swiss Movement* record, the latest Keren Ann, the new Prefuse 73, early Cliff Burton-fueled Metallica, Andrew Hill and Eric Dolphy.

**Besides yourself, who is the most stylish person in Chicago?** Studs Terkel: oral historian, old school disc jockey and author. He's 93, active as hell, smokes cigars, drinks martinis, writes books, speaks around town frequently, rides the bus and never drives, always seems to have his trademark cardigan sweater on (even when it's hot) and he still loves to wear bright red socks.

[www.stopsmilingonline.com](http://www.stopsmilingonline.com)







**JEREMY LEMOS, 29**

One half of White/Light, runs Semaphore Recording, sound engineer

**MATTHEW HALE CLARK, 30**

One half of White/Light and guitarist and composer for Bella Lea

**One article of clothing you can't live without:** Jeremy: A tie between a black fedora I bought in Italy and a 30-year-old Levi's jacket from my Dad; Matt: A two-way tie between a Cubs batting helmet with cup holders and long straws and edible underwear.

**Style icon:** Jeremy: Kim Gordon; Matt: Ditka—he inspired millions of moustaches long past the moustache golden age.

**What were you listening to when you put on this outfit?** Jeremy: Tubeway Army's "Bombers" and Merzbow's *Tree of Kusukusu*; Matt: The voice in my head cursing me for leaving all of my cool clothes in the tour van on the other side of town.

**Besides yourself, who is the most stylish person in Chicago?** Jeremy: Gwen Gubanich—she's always foxy and in all ways hip; Matt: Steve "Plastic Crimewave" Krakow. He's like a psychedelic Raggedy Andy or a dosed James Bond circa *Goldfinger*.

[www.jeremylemos.com](http://www.jeremylemos.com), [www.bellalea.com](http://www.bellalea.com)

**JOHNNY LOVE, 22**

Corruptor of youth, promoter of bacchanalian loft parties and all-around good looker.

**One article of clothing you can't live without:** My Gucci belt

**Style icon:** Every Italian man worth his handmade Italian leather shoes.

**What were you listening to when you put on this outfit?** Danny Boy and The Serious Party Gods' "Castro Boy"

**Besides yourself, who is the most stylish person in Chicago?** There's not just one person who's more stylish than me, though most every girl in my circle of friends puts me to shame.

[www.theopaqueproject.com](http://www.theopaqueproject.com)



# THE CHICAGO GUIDE

The best places to eat, shop and wild out in the Windy City

WORDS: PATRICK SISSON

PHOTOS: AUBREY EDWARDS

## ART GALLERIES

**Bodybuilder & Sportsman** 119 N. Peoria St. #2C, 312.492.7261 *A former sporting goods store that's gotten a decidedly non-jock makeover, this spot features emerging artists.* [www.bodybuilderandsportsman.com](http://www.bodybuilderandsportsman.com)

**Bucket Rider Gallery** 119 N. Peoria St. #3D, 312.421.6993 *Uniquely arranged space serves as an exhibition hall for experimental artists.* [www.bucketridergallery.com](http://www.bucketridergallery.com)

**Kavi Gupta** 835 W. Washington Ave., 312.432.0708 *A spotlessly clean gallery, decked in hardwood floors, that focuses on traditional and video art from around the globe.* [www.kavigupta.com](http://www.kavigupta.com)

**Open End** 2000 W. Fulton, 312.738.2140 *The warehouse aesthetic is strong in this multi-use facility, which presents art and the occasional intimate concert. Also look out for DEPART-ment, the venue's semi-regular craft fair.* [www.ideotech.net/open-end](http://www.ideotech.net/open-end)

**Polvo** 1458 W. 18th St., 773.344.1940 *This long-standing exhibition space in the Pilsen neighborhood concentrates on emerging artists and multimedia.* [www.polvo.org](http://www.polvo.org)

**Three-Walls Gallery** 119 N. Peoria St. #2A, 312.432.3972 *This non-profit gallery brings in top-notch artists with its exemplary residency program. Occasionally, speakers like author Jeff Chang also stop by.* [www.three-walls.org](http://www.three-walls.org)

**Western Exhibitions** 1648 W. Kinzie Ave., 312.307.4685 *Once a portable gallery that shuffled around the city, Western Exhibitions puts on intimate shows featuring local artists.* [www.westernexhibitions.com](http://www.westernexhibitions.com)

## AUDIO GEAR

**123 DJ** 6 S. Michigan Ave., 312.553.4441 *A favorite for local DJs looking for deals on turntables and speakers.* [www.123dj.com](http://www.123dj.com)

**Saturday Audio Exchange** 1021 W. Belmont Ave., 773-935-4434 *Hyperbolic ads aside, this place has a wide selection of equipment and plenty of deals.* [www.saturdayaudio.com](http://www.saturdayaudio.com)

**Sensaphonics** 660 N. Milwaukee Ave., 877.848.1714 *This small shop manufactures custom, state-of-the-art hearing protection that any DJ will appreciate.* [www.sensaphonics.com](http://www.sensaphonics.com)

**Stereo Exchange** 4743 N. Western Ave., 773.784.0004 *Audiophiles looking for vintage gear or repairs should check this store out.*

**Tweeter Home Entertainment** 900 N. Michigan Ave., 312.664.3100 *Stop in for top-notch advice and assistance buying stereos and speakers.* [www.tweeter.com](http://www.tweeter.com)

## BARs

**Big Chicks** 5024 N. Sheridan Ave., 773.728.5511 *Gay- and straight-friendly bar in Uptown that serves great pub food. The interior is decorated with an array of woman-themed art.* [www.bigchicks.com](http://www.bigchicks.com)

**Café Lura** 3184 N. Milwaukee Ave., 773.736.3033 *Despite the Gothic décor and out-of-the-way location, this Polish bar hosts great local DJs. Check out Thursday night drum & bass party Rotation.*

**Cal's Bar** 400 S. Wells Chicago Ave., 312.922.6392 *A funky crowd gathers at this grungy watering hole in the city's business district for cheap booze and bands.* [www.drinkatealsbar.com](http://www.drinkatealsbar.com)

**Danny's Tavern** 1951 W. Dickens Ave., 773.489.6457 *Hidden hipster bar (it's inside the converted first floor of a house) hosts cutting-edge electronic artists on Mondays.*

**Darkroom** 2110 W. Chicago Ave., 773.276.1411 *Strike a pose at this bohemian bar with a photography theme. Work by local photographers hangs on the wall, red light permeates the room and photos are mounted below the glass bar.* [www.darkroombar.com](http://www.darkroombar.com)

**Delilah's** 2771 N. Lincoln Ave., 773.472.2771 *Ascend to punk rock nirvana to hear loud music, drink cheap whiskey, play pool and watch B-movies. DJ duties are handled by a rotating cast of local musicians.*

**Hopleaf** 5148 N. Clark St., 773.334.9851 *Binge on savory bar food and hundreds of Belgian beers and domestic micro-brews at this upscale Andersonville nightspot.*

**Lakeview Lounge** 5110 N. Broadway, 773.769.0994 *A typical ratty dive bar that shines due to the surreal house band, a trio of old-timers that breeze through covers on a stage set behind the bar.*

**Liar's Club** 1665 W. Fullerton Ave., 773.665.1110 *Leather and tattoos are welcome at this punk rock bar. Knock back some cheap drinks and check out the KISS pinball machine.*

**Morseland** 1218 W. Morse Ave., 773.764.8900 *Slick supper club that serves up gourmet grub and live music in equal measure. The weekly hip-hop residents are excellent.* [www.morseland.com](http://www.morseland.com)

**Rainbo Club** 1150 N. Damen Ave., 773.489.5999 *A converted antique bar that's a hot spot for the bohemians that still hover around this quickly gentrifying hood.*

**Rodan** 1530 N. Milwaukee Ave., 773.276.7036 *Video art and DJ culture coexist at this laid-back restaurant and bar. Come for the excellent Asian food and stay for the superb cocktails, like the lychee martini.* [www.rodan.us](http://www.rodan.us)

**Skylark** 2149 S. Halsted St., 312.948.5275 *Dig the old-school photo booth, cheap beers and tater tot obsession at this artist-friendly Pilsen dive.*

**Tini Martini** 2169 N. Milwaukee Ave., 773.269.2900 *Get shaken, not stirred, at this swank, party-friendly neighborhood nightspot. Local DJs get top billing.* [www.tinimartini.com](http://www.tinimartini.com)

**Vintage Wine Bar** 1942 W. Division St., 773.772.3400 *Vintage serves rare vintages in a welcoming, non-elitist environment.* [www.vintage-chicago.com](http://www.vintage-chicago.com)

**Y-Bar** 224 W. Ontario Ave., 312.274.1880 *An heess would feel right at home at this exclusive lounge that caters to the VIP set with bodacious bottle service.* [www.ychicago.com](http://www.ychicago.com)

## BOOKSTORES

**57th Street Books** 1301 E. 57th St., 773.684.1300 *A densely packed subterranean dungeon of amazing books awaits at this Hyde Park institution.* [semcoop.booksense.com](http://semcoop.booksense.com)

**Chicago Comics** 3244 N. Clark St., 773.528.1983 *This store offers a big selection of comics and graphic novels and also allows aspiring artists to sell their work on consignment.* [www.chicagocomics.com](http://www.chicagocomics.com)

**Myopic Books** 1564 M. Milwaukee Ave., 773.862.4882 *Rickety Wicker Park bookstore hosts an occasional concert and poetry reading and plenty of cheap used books.* [www.myopicbookstore.com](http://www.myopicbookstore.com)

**Quimby's** 1854 W. North Ave., 773.342.0910 *Quirky, offbeat retailer that specializes in zines, comic books, local authors and vintage erotica.* [www.quimbys.com](http://www.quimbys.com)

**Women & Children First** 5233 N. Clark St., 773.769.9299 *This independently-owned shop is one of the nation's largest feminist bookstores.* [www.womenandchildrenfirst.com](http://www.womenandchildrenfirst.com)

## CHEAP EATS

**Earwax Café** 1561 N. Milwaukee Ave., 773.772.4019 *This carnival-themed diner, just a few storefronts from Wicker Park's busiest intersection, also rents rare films.* [www.earwaxcafe.com](http://www.earwaxcafe.com)

**Handlebar** 2311 W. North Ave., 773.384.9546 *Vegetarian-friendly bike messenger bar that serves up grub to both the cyclists and cool kids. Grab a pint of locally brewed 312 Urban Wheat ale.* [www.handlebarchicago.com](http://www.handlebarchicago.com)

**Hema's Kitchen** 6406 N. Oakley Ave., 773.338.1627; 2411 N. Clark St., 773.529.1705 *Representing the city's hog-butcher heritage, this self-described "encased meat emporium" serves up stylish dogs, Chicago-style and otherwise.* [www.hotdoughs.com](http://www.hotdoughs.com)

**Hot Doug's** 3324 N. California Ave., 773.279.9550 *Representing the city's hog-butcher heritage, this self-described "encased meat emporium" serves up stylish dogs, Chicago-style and otherwise.* [www.hotdoughs.com](http://www.hotdoughs.com)

**Irazu** 1865 N. Milwaukee Ave., 773.252.5687 *This intimate Costa Rican restaurant offers giant burritos and authentic dishes. The delicious shakes are worth every penny.*

**Leo's Luncheon** 1890 W. Division St., 773.276.6509 *Get your greasy spoon fix at this kitsch-filled diner that serves solid cuisine on the cheap.*

**Pick Me Up Cafe** 3408 N. Clark St., 773.248.6613 *This late-night coffee shop attracts night owls and caffeine fiends from the Northside. It's open until three a.m. on weekdays and goes 24-hour on weekends.*

**Sultan's Market** 2057 W. North Ave., 773.235.3072 *This laid-back Mediterranean joint becomes a falafel sandwich assembly line on weekends. The massive salad bar and specialty sandwiches are also delicious.* [www.chicagofalafel.com](http://www.chicagofalafel.com)

**Weiners Circle** 2622 N. Clark St., 773.477.7444 *This infamous hot dog stand becomes a drunk tank after hours when sauced customers come to be served and heckled by the incredibly profane staff.*

## CHICAGO ODDITIES

**American Science and Surplus** 5316 N. Milwaukee Ave., 773.763.0313 *Kooky collection of spare science parts perfect for wayward inventors.* [www.sciplus.com](http://www.sciplus.com)

**Baha'i Temple** 100 Linden Ave., Wilmette, 847.853.2300 *A massive stone temple celebrating the extremely tolerant Baha'i faith, this is the only structure of its kind in North America.* [www.us.bahai.org](http://www.us.bahai.org)

**Chicagoland Ghost Tours** *Afterlife expert Richard T. Crowe will take you on a haunted tour of Chicago by land or by sea.* [www.ghosttours.com](http://www.ghosttours.com)

**Grizzly's Lodge** 3832 N. Lincoln Ave., 773.281.5112 *Vegetarians should steer clear of this sports bar and hunting lodge, which specializes in exotic meats like crocodile.* [www.grizzylodge.com](http://www.grizzylodge.com)

**Uncle Fun** 1338 W. Belmont Ave., 773.477.8223 *Old-fashioned toy store filled with novelties and old gadgets from decades ago.* [www.unclefunchicago.com](http://www.unclefunchicago.com)

## CLUBS

**Crobar** 1543 N. Kingsbury, 312.266.1900 *Get dirty and debauchorous at the Chicago edition of this world-wide chain of dance clubs. Felix Da Housecat spins here on a semi-regular basis.* [www.crobar.com](http://www.crobar.com)

**Funky Buddha Lounge** 728 W. Grand Ave., 312.666.1695 *Part Moroccan nightclub, part international gallery, this urban oasis has been a favorite of city clubbers for years. Non-smokers should check out the huge non-smoking room.* [www.funkybuddha.com](http://www.funkybuddha.com)



Bodybuilder & Sportsman



Myopic Books



Hot Doug's



Funky Buddha Lounge



Uncle Fun





**Lava Lounge** 859 N. Damen Ave., 773.772.3355  
This intimate Wicker Park DJ bar hosts popular electro, drum & bass and hip-hop nights with such DJs as Jesse De La Peña, Johnny Love and Phantom 45, who also does the bookings.

**Slick's Lounge** 1115 N. Branch St., 312.932.0006  
Intimate venue attracts serious dancers for below-the-radar dance parties and joyous house music. The food isn't too shabby, either.

**Smartbar** 3730 N. Clark St., 773.549.0203  
Basement lounge brings out the best Chicago house DJs along with plenty of jet-setting national and international selectors. [www.smartbarchicago.com](http://www.smartbarchicago.com)

**Sonothèque** 1444 W. Chicago Ave., 312.226.7600  
Unparalleled artistic diversity, otherworldly design and a sublime sound system make this bar the city's premier place to hear DJs. [www.sonothèque.net](http://www.sonothèque.net)

**Sound-bar** 226 W. Ontario Ave., 312.787.4480  
A mega-club filled with multiple bars, multi-hued rooms and glassed-off VIP areas. They even made room for a smoke-filled, state-of-the-art dancefloor. [www.sound-bar.com](http://www.sound-bar.com)

**Spin** 800 W. Belmont Ave., 773.327.7711  
Straight, gay and bisexual melting pot famous for cheap drinks, video jockeys and Friday night shower contests. [www.spin-nightclub.com](http://www.spin-nightclub.com)

**Zentra** 923 W. Weed St., 312.787.0400  
Expansive Hindi-themed club has an outdoor garden perfect for escaping the sweaty club floor. [www.zentranightclub.com](http://www.zentranightclub.com)

COFFEE SHOPS

**Bourgeois Pig** 738 W. Fullerton Ave., 773.883.5282  
A scholarly refuge with an antique feel, this quiet coffee shop fights the good fight against the capitalistic oppression of the Starbucks empire.

**Café con Leche** 2714 N. Milwaukee Ave., 773.289.4274  
Chill Logan Square spot offers strong coffee and Mexican breakfast specials like huevos con chorizo.

**Filter** 1585 N. Milwaukee Ave., 773.227.4850  
Bustling bohemian coffee shop near Wicker Park's busiest intersection. Offers cheap internet access and a sizable menu.

**Jinx Cafe** 1928 W. Division St., 773.645.3667  
Loud and proud coffee shop serves up suitable coffee and cranks up the stereo. Smoke them if you've got them inside.

**Intelligentsia** 3123 N. Broadway St., 773.348.8058  
The retail outlet of Chicago's premier coffee roasters, Intelligentsia serves up a serious cup of joe. [www.intelligentsiacoffee.com](http://www.intelligentsiacoffee.com)

**A Taste of Heaven** 5401 N. Clark St., 773.989.0151  
Another excellent Andersonville hang, this bakery/cafe offers intense coffee, fresh-baked goods and deli sandwiches.

CONCERT VENUES

**Abbey Pub** 3420 W. Grace St., 773.478.4408  
An Irish bar by day, Abbey Pub ditches the drinking songs and hosts hip-hop and rock shows at night. Get there early and grab a balcony seat. [www.abbeypub.com](http://www.abbeypub.com)

**Congress Theater** 2135 N. Milwaukee Ave., 773.252.4000  
Cavernous antique movie palace that plays host to an eclectic array of events from big-name rock concerts to raves and Mexican wrestling.

**Double Door** 1572 N. Milwaukee Ave., 773.489.3160  
This unpolished club, a Wicker Park mainstay with an old-fashioned marquee, has a punk rock edge. [www.doubledoor.com](http://www.doubledoor.com)

**Empty Bottle** 1035 N. Western Ave., 773.276.3600  
Ukrainian Village club is a sparsely furnished dive, but it still books the most consistent lineup of exciting, cutting-edge bands in Chicago. [www.emptybottle.com](http://www.emptybottle.com)

**Hideout** 1354 W. Wabansia Ave., 773.227.4433  
An indie kid clubhouse hidden in the middle of old warehouses, the Hideout hosts all-country concerts and a kick-ass annual block party. [www.hideoutchicago.com](http://www.hideoutchicago.com)

**HotHouse** 31 E. Balbo St., 312.362.9707  
Perched just above surrounding train tracks, this gorgeous venue presents a multi-cultural mash-up of jazz, hip-hop and world music. [www.hothouse.net](http://www.hothouse.net)

**Metro** 3730 N. Clark St., 773.549.0203  
Chicago's most famous rock club has been a rock 'n' roll haven since the early '80s. Everyone from New Order and REM to present-day favorites has graced Metro's stage. [www.metrochicago.com](http://www.metrochicago.com)

**Schubas** 3159 N. Southport Ave., 773.525.2508  
A former Schlitz public house, this old-fashioned bar boasts an intimate back music hall that presents rock and folk. [www.schubas.com](http://www.schubas.com)

**Texas Ballroom** 3012 S. Archer Ave.  
A recently opened Bridgeport venue, the Texas Ballroom hosts occasional concerts and special events. [www.texasballroom.com](http://www.texasballroom.com)

**Wild Hare** 3530 N. Clark St., 773.327.4273  
Catch plenty of rhythm and Red Stripe at this bar, the self-proclaimed reggae capital of the U.S.A. [www.wildharereggae.com](http://www.wildharereggae.com)

CUTTING-EDGE CUISINE

**Alinea** 1723 N. Halsted, 312.687.0110  
The brainchild of culinary whiz Grant Achatz, this new restaurant has gotten national hype for its innovative multi-course meals. [www.alinearestaurant.com](http://www.alinearestaurant.com)

**Green Zebra** 1460 W. Chicago Ave., 312.243.7100  
This hip restaurant's rich vegetarian food is complemented by a sleek minimalist décor and friendly waitstaff. [www.greenzebrachicago.com](http://www.greenzebrachicago.com)

**Hot Chocolate** 1747 N. Damen Ave., 773.489.1747  
Pastry chef Mindy Segal has created a trendy, cozy cave that serves up some seriously mood-altering chocolate treats.

**Moto** 945 W. Fulton Market, 312.428.0058  
Sushi printed on paper and laser-cooked fish? All this and more is available at this kitchen/laboratory. [www.motorestaurant.com](http://www.motorestaurant.com)

**Spring** 2039 W. North Ave., 773.395.7100  
Focusing on American cuisine with Asian accents, this upscale restaurant, located in a former bathhouse, exudes a Zen-like cool. [www.springrestaurant.net](http://www.springrestaurant.net)

FASHIONABLE STORES

**City Soles** 2001 W. North Ave., 773.489.2001  
Sattiate that shoe fetish, at least for a little while, as you check out this store's outstanding selection of goods. [www.citysoles.com](http://www.citysoles.com)

**Hollywood Mirror** 812 W. Belmont Ave., 773.404.4510  
A mix of Hairspray-style kitsch and punk rock panache at this huge vintage store. Look for a wide selection of useless but amusing toys.

**Jake** 3740 N. Southport Ave., 773.929.5253  
Update his wardrobe and metrosexualize your man at this hip Northside boutique.

**Orange Skin** 1429 N. Milwaukee Ave., 773.394.4500  
Savor the furniture you wish you could afford at this high-end, cutting-edge interior design store, arranged to look like the showroom of the future. [www.orangeskin.com](http://www.orangeskin.com)

**p.45** 1643 North Damen Ave., 773.862.4523  
Ultra-cool and urbane Chicago original also champions the work of hip, undiscovered designers. It's gotten props from mags like Lucky and Wallpaper. [www.p45.com](http://www.p45.com)

**Penelope's** 1913 W. Division Ave., 773.395.2351  
Cute, quirky storefront that stocks brands like Ben Sherman and Fred Perry. It's the one-stop shop for any aspiring indie girl or boy.

**Rotofugi** 1953 W. Chicago Ave., 312.491.9501  
The Windy City's own island of misfit toys, Rotofugi sells hip vinyl goodies for the collector or kid in everybody. [www.rotofugi.com](http://www.rotofugi.com)

**Silver Moon** 3337 N. Halsted St., 773.883.0222  
This vintage store specializes in pre-'60s goods. Steven Tyler from Aerosmith gives it his personal seal of approval.

**Untitled** 2707 N. Clark St., 773.404.9225;  
1941 W. North Ave., 773.342.0500; Stock up on club gear, slick threads and cool kicks at these trendy urban fashion boutiques. Each location doubles as a flyer distribution center.

MOVIE HOUSES

**Brew & View** 3145 N. Sheffield Ave., 773.929.6713  
Leave art-house pretensions and subtitles to the film geeks. Brew & View wisely combines the latest in low-brow comedy with low-cost beer. [www.brewview.com](http://www.brewview.com)

**Dirty Movies** Aspiring adult film auteurs can sign up for semester-long studies in the art of erotic film at this website. [www.artvamp.com/dirtymovies](http://www.artvamp.com/dirtymovies)

**Doc Films** 1212 East 59th St., 773.702.8575  
The nation's longest run student film society shows an impressive docket of domestic rarities and foreign flicks. [docfilms.uchicago.edu](http://docfilms.uchicago.edu)

**Facets Multi-Media** 1517 W. Fullerton Ave., 773.281.9075  
This full-service theater and video store makes Blockbuster's selection look like a stack of Betamax tapes. [www.facets.org](http://www.facets.org)

**Music Box** 3733 N. Southport Ave., 773.871.6604  
See films as they were originally meant to be seen at this immense, well-preserved movie house. Check the schedule for special midnight showings. [www.musicboxtheatre.com](http://www.musicboxtheatre.com)

**Odd Obsession** 1659 N. Halsted St., 312.573.9910  
Independent movie store that stocks rare films and cult classics. Check the owner's blog for updates and recommendations. [www.oddobsession.com](http://www.oddobsession.com)

**Gene Siskel Film Center** 164 North State St., 312.846.2600  
This stately, well-designed theater, boasting some seriously lush seats, pays tribute to the film critic's legacy. And it sells beer and wine. [www.artic.edu/webspaces/siskelfilmcenter](http://www.artic.edu/webspaces/siskelfilmcenter)

MUSEUMS

**Art Institute of Chicago** 111 S. Michigan Ave., 312.443.3600  
Even Ferris Bueller visited the world-renowned collection at this granddaddy of Chicago cultural institutions. The Impressionism collection is worth a serious time investment. [www.artic.edu](http://www.artic.edu)

**Chicago Cultural Center** 78 E. Washington St., 312.744.6630  
This cultural gem hosts all manner of exhibits, performances and lectures, most of which are free. It's a great example of tax dollars at work. [www.ci.chi.il.us/Tourism/CultureCenterTour](http://www.ci.chi.il.us/Tourism/CultureCenterTour)

**International Museum of Surgical Science** 1524 N. Lake Shore Drive, 312.642.6502; Gain a newfound appreciation for health insurance when you gaze upon this collection of medical oddities, including an iron lung. [www.imss.org](http://www.imss.org)

**Intuit** 756 W. Milwaukee Ave., 312.243.9088  
See unorthodox exhibits at this institution dedicated to celebrating outsider contributions to the art world. [www.outsider.art.org](http://www.outsider.art.org)

**Mexican Fine Arts Center** 1852 W. 19th St., 312.738.1503  
This institution, the largest Latino cultural center in the United States, also supports a community radio station, Radio Arte. [www.mfacmchicago.org](http://www.mfacmchicago.org)

**Museum of Contemporary Art** 220 E. Chicago Ave., 312.280.2660;  
Chicago's premier contemporary collection contains works by over 6,000 artists and rotating international exhibitions. Tuesdays are free. [www.mcachicago.org](http://www.mcachicago.org)

**Museum of Contemporary Photography** 600 S. Michigan Ave., 312.633.5554  
Shutterbugs and art fans will marvel at the Midwest's largest collection of modern photography. [www.mocp.org](http://www.mocp.org)





# THE CHICAGO GUIDE



Millennium Park



Dusty Groove

**Museum of Holography** 1134 W. Washington Blvd., 312.226.1007; This unique collection of multi-colored art has attracted a handful of hologram enthusiasts and many more kids tripping balls. [www.holographiccenter.com](http://www.holographiccenter.com)

**Peace Museum** 100 North Central Park Ave., 773.368.6450 Indulge that inner hippie and find solace at this large-scale tribute to non-violence and love. [www.peacemuseum.org](http://www.peacemuseum.org)

## PUBLIC SPACES

**Garfield Park Conservatory** 300 North Central Park Ave., 312.746.5100

Chicago's cold and depressing winters can't penetrate this massive greenhouse, filled with exotic plants and stunning landscapes. [www.garfield-conservatory.org](http://www.garfield-conservatory.org)

**Millennium Park** Near Randolph St. and Michigan Ave. Award-winning urban park that contains a huge bike parking and rental facility, a Frank Gehry-designed bandshell, contemporary sculpture and more. [www.millenniumpark.org](http://www.millenniumpark.org)

**Promontory Point** 5491 South Lake Shore Dr. This vista on Lake Michigan boasts a panoramic view of the surrounding water; it's a soothing escape from the city.

**Washington Park** 5531 S. Martin Luther King Dr. An expansive park with a large lagoon and towering trees, it's easy to wander inside and forget you're still in a large city.

## RADIO STATIONS

**WLWV 88.7** [www.wlww.org](http://www.wlww.org)

**WHPK 88.5 FM** [whpk.uchicago.edu](http://whpk.uchicago.edu)

**WZRD 88.3 FM** [www.zap.to/wizard\\_wzrd](http://www.zap.to/wizard_wzrd)

**WNUR 89.3 FM** [www.wnur.org](http://www.wnur.org)

**WBEZ (NPR) 91.5 FM** [www.wbez.org](http://www.wbez.org)

**WCPT 850 AM** [www.shows.airamericaradio.com/stations](http://www.shows.airamericaradio.com/stations)

## RECORD LABELS

**Bloodshot Records** [www.bloodshotrecords.com](http://www.bloodshotrecords.com)

**Brilliante** [www.brilliante.tv](http://www.brilliante.tv)

**Chocolate Industries** [www.chocolateindustries.com](http://www.chocolateindustries.com)

**Drag City** [www.dragcity.com](http://www.dragcity.com)

**Delmark** [www.delmark.com](http://www.delmark.com)

**Dust Traxx** [www.dusttraxx.com](http://www.dusttraxx.com)

**EV Productions** [www.evproductions.net](http://www.evproductions.net)

**File 13** [www.file-13.com](http://www.file-13.com)

**Fresca Recordings** [www.frescarecordings.com](http://www.frescarecordings.com)

**Galapagos4** [www.galapagos4.com](http://www.galapagos4.com)

**Gravel Records** [www.gravelhiphop.com](http://www.gravelhiphop.com)

**Groove Distribution** [www.groovedis.com](http://www.groovedis.com)

**Hefty** [www.heftyrecords.com](http://www.heftyrecords.com)

**Modsquare** [www.modsquare.com](http://www.modsquare.com)

**Thrill Jockey** [www.thrilljockey.com](http://www.thrilljockey.com)

**Shit Sandwich** [www.shitsandwichrecords.com](http://www.shitsandwichrecords.com)

**The Consumers Research and Development Label** [www.consumerslabel.net](http://www.consumerslabel.net)

**Touch and Go** [www.tgrec.com](http://www.tgrec.com)

## RECORD STORES

**Beverly Rare Records** 11612 S. Western Ave., 773.779.0066 A quaint store near the southern tip of the city that specializes in ultra-rare vinyl. [www.beverlyrecords.com](http://www.beverlyrecords.com)

**Dusty Groove** 1120 N. Ashland Ave., 773.342.5800 The retail outlet of a massive mail-order store—specializing in jazz, rare groove, hip-hop, Brazilian and more—attracts all types of vinyl junkies. [www.dustygroove.com](http://www.dustygroove.com)

**Gramophone** 2843 N. Clark Ave., 773.472.3683 This Chicago music institution stocks the latest vinyl, CDs and mixtapes from around the world along with those of local producers, many of whom worked here at one time or another. [www.gramophonerecords.com](http://www.gramophonerecords.com)

**Hi-Fi Records** 2568 N. Clark St., 773-880-1002 Small storefront that stocks bins and bins of new and used vinyl. [www.hifirecords.com](http://www.hifirecords.com)

**Hot Jams** 4814 S. Pulaski St., 773.581.5267 A Southside institution that regularly gets top-notch R&B and rap stars in for signings and performances.

**Jazz Record Mart** 25 E. Illinois, 312.222.1467 The world's largest selection of blues and jazz, including rare 78s and music from the avant-garde, are inside this massive store. [www.jazzmart.com](http://www.jazzmart.com)

**Reckless Records** 3161 N. Broadway Ave., 773.404.5080; 1532 N. Milwaukee Ave., 773.235.3727; Twin outposts of indie rock heaven stock everything an elitist record clerk could ever want. Be on the lookout for in-store performances. [www.reckless.com](http://www.reckless.com)

**Wax Addict** 1014 N. Ashland Ave., 773.772.9930 House jams, breaks and more at this DJ-friendly store. Ever-changing art decorates the interior. [www.waxaddict.com](http://www.waxaddict.com)

## SKATE SPOTS

**31st Street Beach** 31st Street and Lake Shore Drive Large outdoor, city-sponsored skate park to keep the kids out of trouble.

**Grind Gear Skate Shop** 1820 Glenview Rd., Glenview, 847.998.9405 Suburban stop for extreme sport enthusiasts. [www.grindgear.net](http://www.grindgear.net)

**Push** 40 E. Chicago Ave., 312.573.9996 Skateboard and skate culture shop located just a few grinds away from the Magnificent Mile.

**Uprise Skateboard Shop** 1820 N. Milwaukee Ave., 773.342.7763 This headquarters for downtown skaters sells all sorts of top-notch gear. [www.upriseskateshop.com](http://www.upriseskateshop.com)

**Windy City Rollers** New all-female roller derby league rules the track, hosting events around the city. [www.windycityrollers.com](http://www.windycityrollers.com)



**FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 30**  
STILL MUSIC WELCOMES DEMON DAYS... AN OFFICIAL PLANET E SELECTION...

**CARL CRAIG**  
GAMALL  
JEROME DARRADJI

**SUNDAY, OCTOBER 2**  
AN EXCLUSIVE DJ SET FROM...

**PETER HOOK** OF NEW ORDER

**FRIDAY, OCTOBER 7**

**KASKADE**  
MANIC

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 8**

**COLETTE**  
PETE MOSS

**THURSDAY, OCTOBER 13**  
KOMPAKT...

**SUPERPITCHER**  
ADA / METOPE

**FRIDAY, OCTOBER 14**  
FAITH UK...

**TERRY FARLEY**  
DJ HEATHER  
STUART PATTERSON

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 15**

**THE GLIMMERS**  
JORDAN ZAWIDEH

smartbar

3730 N CLARK ST | CHICAGO | 773-549-0203 | SMARTBARCHICAGO.COM

**WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 19**  
PANIC WELCOMES... AN EXCLUSIVE DJ SET FROM...

**ANDY ROURKE** OF THE SMITHS  
POGO

**FRIDAY, OCTOBER 21**  
THE RETURN OF THE THREE CHAIRS!

**KENNY DIXON JR** AKA **MOODYMANN**  
THEO PARRISH / RICK WILHITE / MARCELLUS PITTMANN

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 22**  
THE BRAD OWEN BIRTHDAY JAM... 31ST EDITION...

**DIXON**  
SIMON LEE OF FAZE ACTION  
NICK NICE

**FRIDAY, OCTOBER 28**  
WORLD EVOLUTION & ACIDMAN'S BIRTHDAY PARTY...

**MILES MAEDA**  
RAOUL BELMANS OF SWIRL PEOPLE / ACIDMAN

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 29**  
A GET PHYSICAL HALLOWEEN...

**DJ T**  
BRAD OWEN

**FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 4**

**RECLOSE**

**SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 5**  
CLASSIC MUSIC COMPANY MEETS LARGE MUSIC...

**DERRICK CARTER**  
ROY DAVIS JR. / JEFF CRAVEN



# CONSUMERS RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT

From dreamy IDM to underground hip-hop, this label curates the best of the Midwest.

WORDS: BRION PAUL PHOTO: CHRIS EICHENSEER AT SOMEODDPILOT, CO.



Consumer Research and Development's Geoffrey Wilson and Chris Eichenseer

The right and left coasts may regard the Midwest as a cattle parking lot, but the curatorial lasso of Chicago's Consumers Research and Development Label cuts a wide swathe through this foolish chimeria, rounding up an eclectic aural assemblage of the Midwest's finest audio individualists.

Formed in 2001 by Jodi Williams and Geoffrey Wilson, the label—very much a sum of its divergent parts—boasts adventurous electronic material by Alder and Elius, String Theory, Miles Tilmann and The Timeout Drawer, usually lusciously packaged on colored vinyl and limited edition CD. “Factory, Skam, Schematic, Matador, Mo’ Wax—these were labels blurring the lines, combining art and music in a way that it didn’t matter

what [they released], you’d pick it up,” says avid record collector Wilson. “Nobody had a problem with Mo’ Wax putting out Money Mark, no one cared when Matador put out Large Professor.”

And yet, people seem to really care when Consumers puts out a record, whether it’s Signaldrift’s twisted electronic dancefloor elegies, The Timeout Drawer’s ethereal instrumental epics or Single Minded Pros’ sturdy underground hip-hop. The imprint’s blindingly effective manifesto is best summed up with the recently released *Hazardous Materials* compilation, which features back catalog treasures buttressed by new tracks and remixes, all packaged with that distinctive Consumers designer sheen.

“One of the first labels for me was Def Jam, and if you look at [them], basically the label is the logo,” explains Wilson. “The label reflects the aesthetic.” Similarly, Consumers defines its aesthetic by working local designers and artists, including Safety Orange Type, Marshall Preheim and Someoddpilot, an outfit run by The Timeout Drawer drummer Christopher Eichenseer. “All this is because of a domino action,” says Wilson. “It’s definitely a small town scene here with a good community. This person leads to that person...” And that person leads right to you.

[www.consumerslabel.net](http://www.consumerslabel.net)

WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE CHICAGO INSTITUTION? **Geoffrey Wilson:** As a bartender, I'd have to say the bars. I like Map Room, Empty Bottle and The Metro for music, and Underbar, where I work.

# DANGER DOOM



**Danger Mouse & MF DOOM**

Guest appearances by:

**Talib Kweli, Cee-Lo & Ghostface**

**Epitaph [adult swim]**

[dangerdoom.com](http://dangerdoom.com) [adultswim.com](http://adultswim.com) [epitaph.com](http://epitaph.com)



# THE PACIFICS

Chicago's most tight-knit hip-hop trio keeps it universal.

WORDS: MAX HERMAN PHOTO: CHUCK PRZYBYL



The Pacifics: Norman Rockwell, KP and Strike 3

"Even if we weren't doing music, we'd still be eating chicken." These are the words of KP (MC/producer) from The Pacifics, who cooks up a fresh batch of fried chicken for himself and his longtime crewmates, MC Strike3 and MC/DJ Norman Rockwell, to enjoy every Sunday. While each of these MCs holds down nine-to-fives (some working six days a week), as true friends they keep their schedules clear at least once a week to kick back, get their eat on, and create their thoroughly enjoyable hip-hop.

In celebration of their weekly tradition and kinship, this Chicago hip-hop trio aptly named their latest album *Sunday's Chicken* (All Natural Inc.). The follow-up to their self-released 2002

debut, *The September First Project: Long Overdue* (Propaganda Movement), *Chicken* is the upshot of eight-plus years of paying dues in the Chicago underground. With its party-ready beats, tag-team rhymes and intriguing concepts, the record simply showcases what can be accomplished when talented artists actually get along.

"By getting together all the time, it just keeps everything more tight-knit," explains Strike3. "We knock out a lot of ideas when we're together," adds Norman Rockwell. "A lot of times we'll just ask each other for help," adds KP. "So you can find a little bit of everybody in each of us. We play off each other a lot and I think it shows."

The Pacifics rap about more than just fried

chicken—their rhymes have detailed everything from their shared love for their hometown ("Hold It Down") to their need to get tipsy after a hard day's work ("Nobody"). While they also all share a Filipino nationality, this trio chooses to not let their Asian background become a gimmick. "We don't use our race as a crutch," says KP. "It is important to know your heritage, but at the same time, once you get over-indulged in that, I think people would just get turned away."

Thus The Pacifics opt to deliver hip-hop universally, one song and one concept at a time. As Strike3 clarifies, "A lot of people like to label it Asian hip-hop (but) there's no label on it—it's just hip-hop."

[www.thepacifics.com](http://www.thepacifics.com)

**WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE CHICAGO INSTITUTION?** **Strike3:** SubT (Subterranean)—that's the only place I go. **KP:** Pizzaman's Chicago pizza. Out of all the places we've traveled you can't beat it. It even goes beyond pizza—food, period. **Norman Rockwell:** Buffalo Joe's.

# GROOVE DISTRIBUTION

The warehouse crew who bring all the best vinyl to your record crates.

WORDS: PETER NICHOLSON ARTWORK: MIREYA ACIERTO



Groove Distribution staff: Steve Schoener, Julian Carow, Josh Ferguson, Dirk van den Heuvel, Henderick Mitchell, Thomas (Thaione Davis) Martin, Tobias Berblinger and (not pictured) Jeff Johns and Chuck Roder

How do obscure underground 12" singles—red-hot mash-ups from London, broken bossanova from Rome, drum & bass from Stockholm—find their way onto the shelves of your local record emporium? There's a good chance they come from Chicago's Groove Distribution, fine purveyor of "music with soul and music that falls through the cracks," as founder and president Dirk van den Heuvel puts it.

Van den Heuvel worked at Cargo Distribution for nine years; when they went out of business in 1995 he founded Groove Dis, which has become a vital link between forward-thinking labels and listeners. If you run a record shop and want to make sure you have the latest soulful house 12" from Paris' Q-Tape Records or an upcoming nu-jazz CD from Japanese compilation experts KSR, you better be in touch with van den Heuvel.

But unlike a DJ whose only concern is having the freshest sounds, van den Heuvel has to make sure these records are going to sell. "There's records that get written up in magazines, that people love and whatever, and then you cut through the bull and you find out, 'Well, shit, they only

sold 300 copies!'" van den Heuvel explains with more than a note of exasperation. Besides the paucity of consumers with good taste, another challenge Groove Dis is currently tackling is the general decline of DJ culture.

"We're in the business of selling dance music to people who like dance music and not in the business of selling 12" singles to DJs," he explains. "If your business model is based on selling vinyl records to DJs, you're doomed. That's just a teeny part of the market out there and it's getting smaller every day."

To that end, Groove Dis expends much effort scouting out CDs and keeping an eye on digital music developments. With 10 employees devoted to finding the kind of music "Gilles [Peterson] might play," the company does an amazing job of staying abreast of the latest movements, but van den Heuvel is well aware that he's not about to challenge the Virgin Mega's of the world for revenue. "I'm sure if I liked stuff that was a little bit more popular we'd be a bigger company," he laughs.

[www.groovedis.com](http://www.groovedis.com)

**WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE CHICAGO INSTITUTION?** **Dirk van den Heuvel:** Edwardo's Pizza.



# HEFTY RECORDS

At 10 years and counting, an eclectic Chicago label looks towards the future.

WORDS: PETER NICHOLSON PHOTO: DAVID BLACK



What's not to love about a label bold enough to release records by jazz trombonist Phil Ranelin and dirty techno-meister T. Raumschmiere? Despite, or perhaps because of, brash eclecticism, John Hughes III's Hefty Records has cultivated a dedicated following in the fickle world of independent labels. This year, Hefty celebrates 10 years of releasing records by bands like Telefon Tel Aviv, Savath & Savalas and Hughes himself as Slicker.

A self-described "studio rat," Hughes has to find a quiet room to talk on the phone so as not to wake his one-week-old baby boy. When he settles down, he explains that he founded Hefty as a way to release his own music; it has since grown into a home for music that shares a common

headspace, if not an instantly recognizable sound.

Growing up, Hughes relied on labels like Def Jam, Mo' Wax, and early Warp Records for consistently good releases, but he doesn't necessarily see modern-day parallels. "[Labels with a specific sound are] kinda missing right now, I think," he says. "[But] for me personally, it's all about longevity. It'd be very easy to make the direction of Hefty genre-driven and work on a specific sound, but I feel like if you do that you've got maybe five years and then you're dried up."

Still, there are sonic similarities (and shared band members) between Hefty artists like Telefon Tel Aviv, Laltra and Hughes' new project with Shin Tasaki (Spanova), Some Water and Sun—namely, an obvious appreciation of hip-hop, a

near-obsessive attention to instrumental detail, and a fractured love of melody.

It's clear that, despite an ambitious schedule that will see four records released in early 2006, Hefty isn't just churning records out as fast as possible; instead, they're thinking about the long haul, something Hughes partly attributes to his hometown.

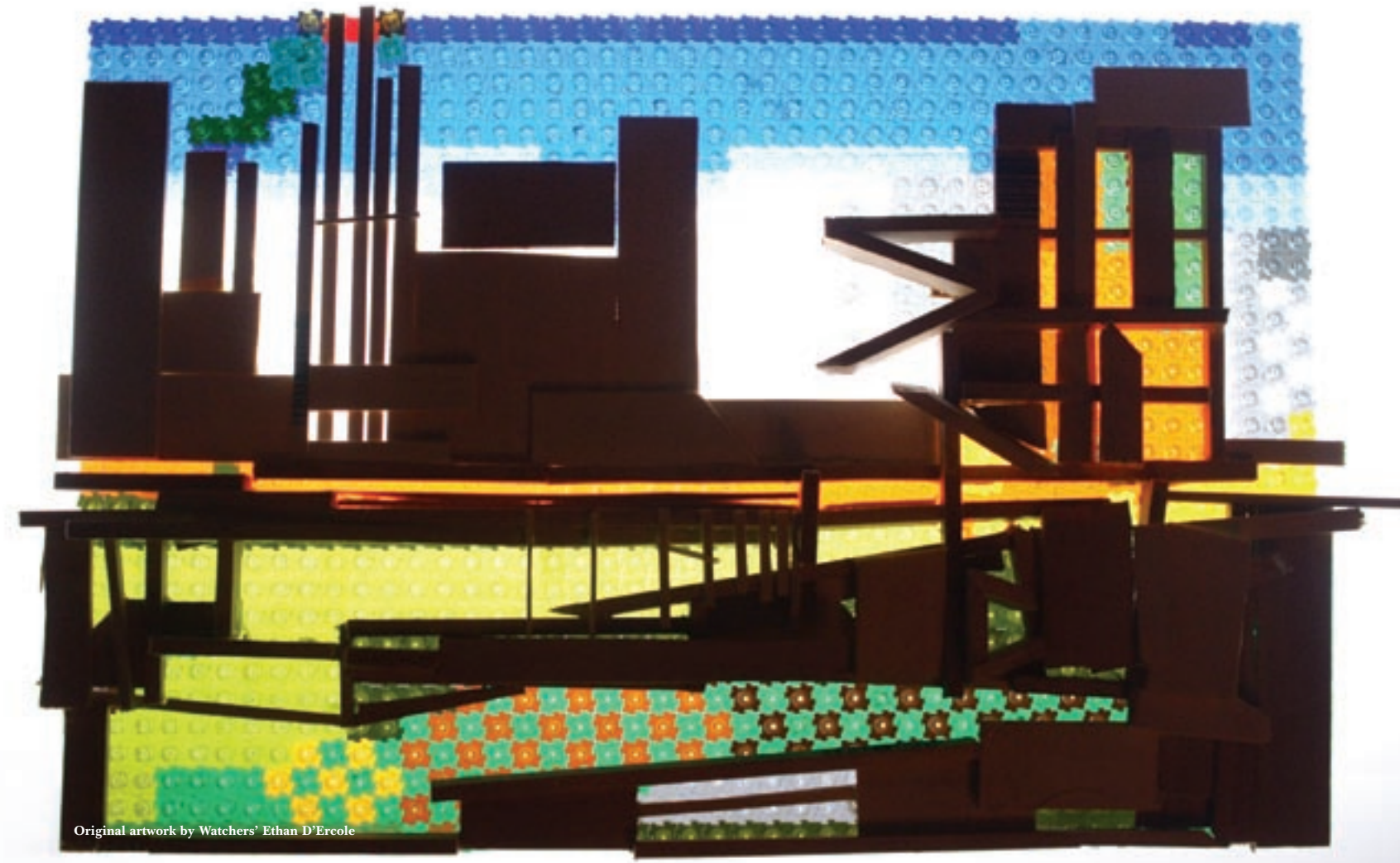
"Chicago is a pretty impressive city just to visit and I definitely think it brings something to Hefty, just knowing what sort of history there is to music here—it's always in the back of your mind. I think it's a hard city to impress anyone in, so it keeps you fighting."

[www.heftyrecords.com](http://www.heftyrecords.com)

# WATCHERS

An angular quintet spreads the punk funk gospel from rooftop to rooftop.

WORDS: STEVE MARCHESE ARTWORK: ETHAN D'ERCOLE



Original artwork by Watchers' Ethan D'Ercole

While New Yorkers boast about the excess of talented bands coming from their metropolis, it wasn't that long ago that Chicago represented the heliocentric center of the indie rock universe. And even though labels like Touch & Go, Thrill Jockey and Kranky are still releasing urgent and challenging music, ironically it's New Jersey label Gern Blandsten that's home to Watchers, one of Chicago's most compelling and genre-killing quintets.

Formed in Chicago in the fall of 2000 by lead singer/keyboardist Michael Guarrine and guitarist Ethan D'Ercole, Watchers expands the borders of danceable, funk-informed rock. Their propulsive, intellectual angularity recalls Talking Heads, The Minutemen and perhaps most directly Trenchmouth, an influential yet largely unknown Chicago quartet that included Fred Armisen (*Saturday Night Live*) and Damon Locks and Wayne Montana of The Eternals. "We all love to listen to music," says Guarrine of their influences, "[and] we're always trying to freak each other out by finding a 'new' amazing band and bringing it to practice for everyone to hear. It's a lot of fun."

On 2003's full-length *To The Rooftops* (Gern Blandsten) and this year's "Dunes Phase" EP, Watchers successfully merge an entire dusty crate of styles—rock, dub, soul, Afrobeat, funk, disco and punk—into a successful and sometimes unexpectedly minimal creation. In the hands of a lesser band, a balancing act like this would certainly explode in overzealous cacophony.

It's probably no coincidence that a visible superhero theme seems to be developing parallel to the four-piece's growing audience admiration. From their LP title—which suggests a superhuman mode of urban locomotion—to *The Hideout*, one of their favorite places to play in Chicago, Watchers are about to undertake one of their most perilous and unlikely assignments yet: swinging the rock spotlight away from the East Coast and back onto the Windy City. "Being from Chicago is about being an underdog," quips D'Ercole. "A lot of our friends that are making music are all over the map. There is no Chicago sound, just really tasteful people doing really tasteful things...and being supportive of your endeavors as well."

[www.watchersmusic.com](http://www.watchersmusic.com)

WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE CHICAGO INSTITUTION? **John Hughes:** White Sox and Vienna beef.

WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE CHICAGO INSTITUTION? **Michael Guarrine:** Finkl & Sons Steel Co., Marc Chagall Mosaic at Bank One Plaza, Vintage Vinyl (Evanston, IL). **Ethan D'Ercole:** Out of the Past Records for record archaeology, then down the street to Mac Arthur's for some serious grub.



# QUANTAZELLE

A one-woman powerhouse fashions her own computer world.

WORDS: TYRA BANGS PHOTO: MIREYA ACIERTO



"I had a Commodore 64 computer when I was six and haven't gone more than four months without a computer since then," says 27-year-old Liz McLean Knight, who says she spends anywhere between seven and 16 hours a day behind the gleaming silver keys of her laptop.

But Knight is not just wasting time on Myspace or feverishly trading on eBay—truly a product of the computer age, her work is entirely predicated on technology. She runs an online magazine called *Modsquare*, dedicated to profiling the IDM/experimental techno scene via interviews and event reviews. Under the name Zelle, she designs jewelry made from MIDI cables, diodes and microprocessors. Knight also runs a record label called subVariant, for which she has released sev-

eral albums of minimal techno and lush, melodic IDM tracks (inspired by Autechre and early Aphex Twin) under the name Quantazelle.

"My first songs were done in Impulse Tracker—this sequencer [program] where you had to learn hexadecimal just to put reverb on a few notes," says Knight, who started making techno tracks four years ago. "[It's] the sort of thing that people would have used to score early videogames. It had a bit of a learning curve but it's awesome." Knight has since moved on to sequencing in Cubase VST with a keyboard nearby for sketching out quick melodies.

Somehow, in between circuit bending and stringing together capacitors, Knight has also found time to DJ at Chicago techno events, produce more 4/4 tracks to play in her DJ set and

assemble a compilation for subVariant, featuring beat surgery from the likes of Kero, edit and Quench. What makes all this possible? Knight says she couldn't do it anywhere but Chicago.

"[In Chicago], I can really focus on my work without being overly stressed about the basic standard of living costs, and there are a lot of great people here doing things—from holding software workshops to festivals and fashion shows. People from other labels based here (like Hefty, Consumers and Chocolate Industries) have been helpful with their advice and experience. And the city is big enough that we get a lot of great acts coming through—there's pretty much always something to do."

[www.quantazelle.com](http://www.quantazelle.com), [www.modsquare.com](http://www.modsquare.com)

**WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE CHICAGO INSTITUTION?** **Quantazelle:** Sonotheque—it's got a great interior and one of the best sound systems in Chicago. Rodan is also nice in the vibe it has managed to create and its willingness to host more experimental multimedia events, as well as their excellent vegetarian dumpings, swank couches and trippy video mirrors in the bathrooms.



## FOLIE

*Eyepennies* CD/LP

Folie's first CD, *Misspass*, was ranked #2 in the year-end album poll by esteemed German paper *DerBug*. Now Mr. Stefan Thor returns with the anticipated follow-up, *Eyepennies*. The latest tip from Sweden, Folie shares his country's love of pop music. In his harmonies there's a little *Annie* and a little *Abba*, but his production is like *Andreas Tillander* with *Stina Nordenstam*. While you're enraptured with Sweden's pop music, their electronica is taking over. Folie is helping the cause.

**FORCED EXPOSURE**



## CYNE

*Evolution Flight* CD/2LP

From the Miami hothouse of Beta Bodega, Rice & Beans and Botanica Del Jibaro comes *Cyne*. Lyrics of revolt, revenge and justice bounce over stonking *J. Dilla*/*Prefuse* style-beats. Your MCs: *Akin* and *Cise Star*, who roll like *Common* with a conscience. All this from the label that brought you *Boy Robot*, *I am Not a Gun* and *Ulrich Schnauss*. A new advancement in hip-hop.

**FORCED EXPOSURE**



## ANDREW PEKLER

*Strings + Feedback* CD/LP

After two albums for *-Scape*, California's *Andrew Pekler*'s distorted dub meets *Morton Feldman*'s strings for his first release on *Staubgold*. It is called *Strings + Feedback* and it takes you inside the mixer for an intimate look. Listen to the transistors, the wires and the processors as they hum with the avant-garde harmonics of one of the greatest composers of the 20th century. A crucial conversation between experiments past and present. And future.

**STAUFGOLD**

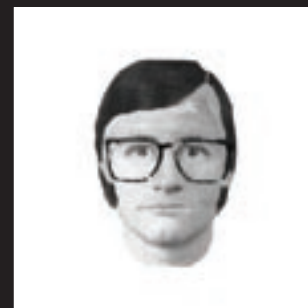


## ARPANET

*Quantum Transposition* CD/2LP

*Quantum Transposition* is the second LP from *Arpanet*. From the *Dataphysix* laboratory in Detroit, where the *Dopplereffekt* project resides. *Arpanet* is one of the strangest and most mysterious units of the contemporary electronic music scene. A strange mixture of scientific and sexually explicit political allusion; highly eclectic and unusual. Sonic research in a similar field to *Kraftwerk*, *Aphex Twin*, *Derrick May*. The *Arpanet* debut was released on *Air*'s label. This one is on *AFX*'s. Sleep not.

**AFX**

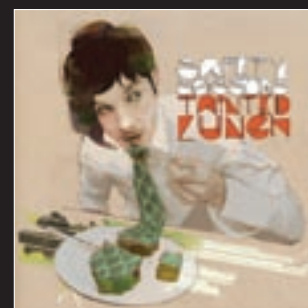


## BERTRAND BURGALAT

*Portrait-Robot* CD/2LP

Mssr. Burgalat is a *producer* (*April March*), a *label-owner* (*Tricatel*), a *touring bassist* (*Air*), a *remixer* (*Depeche Mode*, *Soul II Soul*), and a *solo artist*. This is his second album, a follow-up to his critically-acclaimed debut *The Sssound of Mmmusic* and the talented auteur empties his bag of tricks for you. This is the *official Hit Thing* release with a 24-page insert/double-digipak design, 2 bonus tracks, a video and of course special double-vinyl. *Portrait-Robot* is a personal masterpiece of elegant complexity.

**HIT THING**



## SAFETY SCISSORS

*Tainted Lunch* CD/2LP

Springing from *San Francisco*, *Safety Scissors* is a new kind of electronic music: smart, hip and clever. *Matthew Patterson Curry* joins friends like *Erlend Øye* (from *Kings of Convenience*), *Kevin Blechdom*, and *FranHoise Cactus* of *Stereo Total* in the confectionary kitchen. Curry (*Force Tracks*, *Plug Research*) moves to *Pole*'s label *-scape* for his finest album yet. Mixed by *Vladislav Delay*, too, so the talent on this disc just hit the redline. *Tainted Lunch* is a stupendous achievement.

**SCAPE**

## New Releases distributed by FORCED EXPOSURE

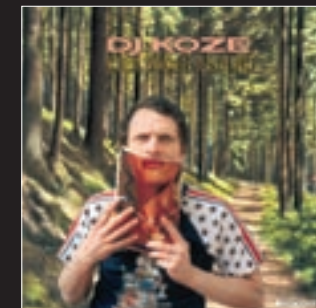


## SEÑOR COCONUT

*Coconut FM* CD

Prepare thyself. *Señor Coconut* (aka *Uwe Schmidt* aka *Atom Heart*) has compiled his favorite Latin club tunes and it is a top-shelf smasher: a 17-track tour of 9 genres: *Reggaeton* reborn, *Cumbiaton* exposed, *Acidton* introduced. The label that brought you *Rio Baile Funk* does it again. An unparalleled success, *CFM* can not and will not be imitated. Liners by *Philip Sherburne*: "Coconut FM kills snobs dead: it's the populist avant-garde."

**ESSAY RECORDINGS**



## DJ KOZE

*Kosi Comes Around* CD/2LP

*DJ Koze* (pronounced Kot-Ze) is *Kompakt*'s secret weapon. A good friend of the chic Köln label, *Koze* (aka *Stefan Kozalla*) makes music from the soul. See also *Adolf Noise*, and his *International Pony* group (*Playhouse*, *Zomba*). His sound is fluid and funky, careful with vocals and cautious with melody but always spot on. After the mix CD *All People Is My Friends*, countless remixes and releases for the *Speicher* label, now finally the LP. Enjoy.

**KOMPAKT**

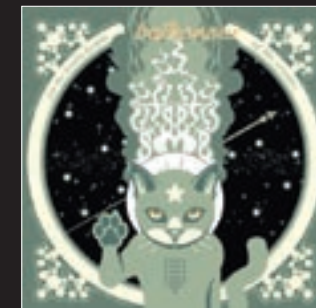


## HAUSCHKA

*The Prepared Piano* CD/LP

Volker Bertelmann, aka *Hauschka* has been preparing his piano for years: clamping *leather*, *felt* or *rubber* between the *strings*, *aluminum* and *corks* on hammers, weaving *guitar strings* within, etc. Now he plays it for you. With a childlike wonder and a *Fluxus* passion, Bertelmann draws lovely *minimal music* from his art instrument, *East-Asian harmonies* emanate, curling notes and delicate lines that shadow *Satie* or *Ravel*. Avant-garde that is pretty like a flower.

**STAUFGOLD**

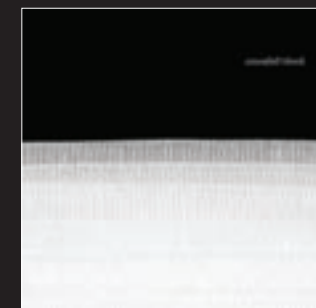


## BAIKONOUR

*For The Lonely Hearts of the Cosmos* CD/LP

Exceeding *DJ Shadow* in depth and *RJD2* in eclecticism, *Jean-Emmanuel Krieger* (aka *Baikounour*) draws sounds and inspirations from all corners of the musical map. Growing up in Versailles with *Pink Floyd* from Dad and *Marvin Gaye* from Mum, he soon moved onto *MBV*, *Cocteau Twins* and *Sonic Youth*. Throw in *Krautrock*, *Os Mutantes*, *psychedelia*, *Indian Music* and more, stir with a steady hand and scope the sonic spread of immaculate earfood.

**MELODIC**



## ASWEFALL

*Bleed.* CD/12"

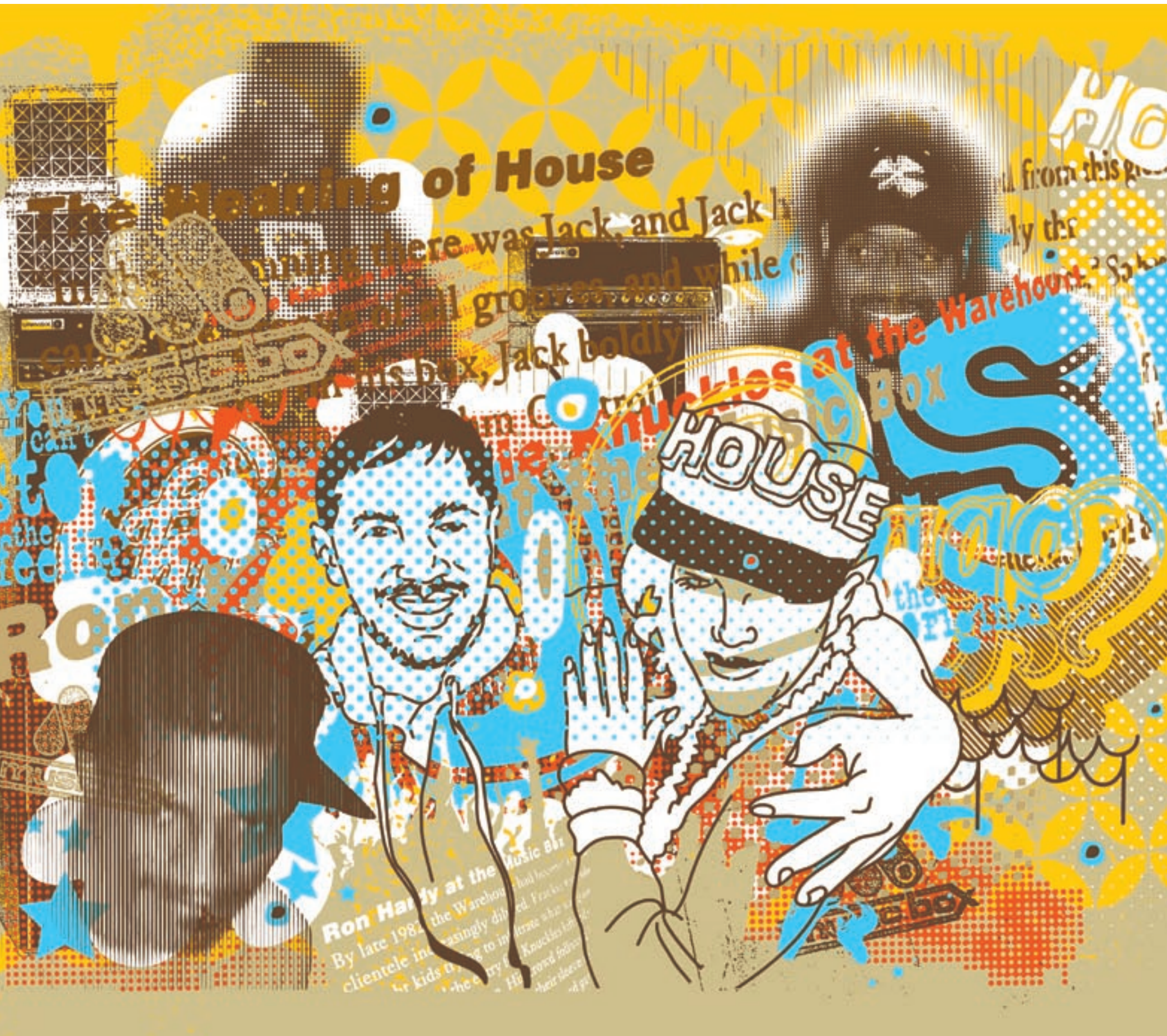
This CD is buzzing like a hive. The latest from über-class *Tigersushi* Records, *aswefall* is what they call *digitalfolk*, so: folk songwriting, *new wave* basslines and instrumental interludes done in the computerized studio. The two legendary Parisians behind *aswefall* have an aesthetic well a mile-deep. Jump on in. *Aswefall* plays *North Six* in *NYC* on September 15th along with the rest of the *Tigersushi* family: *Panico*, *Sir Alice*, *Principles of Geometry* and *Poni Hoax*. Not to miss.

(Kill The DJ)

**TIGERSUSHI RECORDS**

These titles available at fine independent record stores or online at [www.forcedexposure.com](http://www.forcedexposure.com)  
Retailers: request wholesale information from [te@forcedexposure.com](mailto:te@forcedexposure.com)





# TESTIFY!

An oral history of three of house music's most seminal clubs

WORDS: PETER NICHOLSON ILLUSTRATION: RAY NOLAND

Three Chicago clubs loom large over the history of dance music: The Warehouse, The Power Plant and The Music Box. The Warehouse was the first—from 1977 until he left to open The Power Plant in 1982, Frankie Knuckles was its king, turning dancers inside out with his New York-style mixing skills. When Knuckles left, The Warehouse's owners opened The Music Box and hired the late Ron Hardy, whose thirst for innovation was matched only by his penchant for excess. Though few in the crowd would have said they were dancing to "house music," the blend of disco, New Wave, R&B and soul heard at The Warehouse, The Power Plant and The Music Box would go on to define the genre until the present day. We asked some folks who were there to tell us what they remember.

**Frankie Knuckles on the songs of The Warehouse and The Power Plant:**

"If there was any song that signified The Warehouse experience it would be 'Let No Man Put Asunder' by First Choice. It spoke of everything—the relationship I had with the folks that frequented The Warehouse weekly. It was a happy wedding/marriage that occurred every Saturday night/Sunday morning, religiously. And that one song is at the root of what all house music is about—its backbeat and strong vocal delivery of faith and devotion is what kept folks coming back for me.

"For The Power Plant, it had to be the introduction of Jamie Principle and his anthems 'Your Love,' 'Baby Wants To Ride' and 'I'm Gonna Make You Scream' that ushered in a whole new way for the kids in Chicago to recognize their own homegrown talent. Living in this world during that period, none of us could've ever imagined that what we were doing would blossom into what it has [or] spawned as much as it has. And no matter how many ways from Sunday that someone new comes along trying to reinvent the wheel, the core of what this music is will always be traced right back to these few songs and these two artists."

**Chip E on The Warehouse:**

"I'd never seen so many beautiful people enjoy music so freely."

**DJ Pierre on The Music Box:**

"The thing I remember most about The Music Box was that it was the first time I [had] ever seen people praising a DJ as if he were a prophet of the Lord. People were screaming Ron Hardy's name like their very souls depended on him and

his music. Hundreds of people lined the underground car park like it was Woodstock! The first time I came there was the day I was truly baptized into the true meaning of house music."

**Screamin' Rachel on The Music Box:**

"My favorite club of all time was The Music Box. I have traveled the world and still never experienced a DJ who mesmerized a crowd like Ron Hardy. The experience was raw and primal and shook you to the core of your being. When Ron introduced a new record, he literally burned it to the ground. A night I will always remember was hanging out with Marshall Jefferson, Hercules and Bam Bam with Ron Hardy slammin' our new cut at the time, 88's "Rock Me"—it was pure musical orgasm! The Music Box was the true spirit of house."

**Chip E on The Music Box vs. The Power Plant:**

"The [music at] The Power Plant was more conservative. It was more of your contemporary disco, R&B and soul. The Music Box was much more cutting edge, much more avant garde. You'd hear Laurie Anderson 'O Superman.' You'd hear the weirdest tracks, just rhythm tracks played back to back continuously. It was all about feeling the music more than hearing it, all about what would get you moving. So you'd hear a lot more tracks and more obscure material at The Music Box, whereas The Power Plant was a lot more vocals and established hits.

"The Music Box was a much more raw crowd. The people really didn't care what they were wearing—they came there to dance and sweat. The Power

Plant [had] a bit more mature crowd. A lot of people had grown up with The Warehouse, and they put on their Armanis and such. They'd dance, but try not to sweat too much—you know, dry cleaning bills! But The Music Box was a totally raw experience. It was a minimalist environment, almost like being in an enclosed alley with a couple of Mars lights and some strobes. Between the two clubs, there might have been 20-30% people who'd go to both clubs, but [usually] you were either a kinda mature, Friday night Power Plant guy or a you were a down and dirty Saturday night Music Box guy."

**Gene Hunt on The Music Box vs. The Power Plant:**

"What was the difference between Ron Hardy and Frankie Knuckles? They're both the godfathers of house, but it breaks down to this: one crowd [was] more bougie and the other crowd was ghetto. Frankie Knuckles's crowd was the 'Oh, no. You're not good enough to be around us—we're the elite.' Ron Hardy's crowd was the kids that went to the projects, the kids that were from the streets. [But] if they did something on the same night, they'd both have crowds. Chicago's so funny like that. People would be like 'OK, let's go check out Ronnie for a while then we're gonna slide up and check out Frankie for a couple of hours.'"



# GALAPAGOS 4

This hip-hop label is an island unto itself.

WORDS: STACEY DUGAN ILLUSTRATION: JOSHUA GROTTO FOR ALL HEART DESIGN



“We’re trying to bring back actual intelligence and reality to [hip-hop],” says Jeff Kuglich, owner and president of Chicago-based label Galapagos 4. Kuglich started the imprint in 1999 with little but a clearly articulated mission: to preserve the integrity of hip-hop music. Sure, it smacked of fresh-from-college idealism, but Kuglich, who was then 22, somehow managed to express his high-minded vision without pretension or arrogance. And after six years of hacking away at the music industry, Kuglich’s devotion to hip-hop culture is still so earnest it’s damn near admirable.

The label is home to artists of the same ilk. Take Typical Cats, a trio of MCs (Qwaazar, Denizen Kane and Qwel) who have gleefully

embraced the underground ethos, candidly exploring socio-political issues while staying sharply focused on literary mechanics. Their 2001 self-titled debut was among the first of G4’s releases, recorded at the label’s original Chicago HQ, a “house-slash-office-slash-studio” furnished sparingly with one microphone and an array of dated analog equipment. But the gritty crackle and pop quality of those early recordings only added to G4’s indie mystique. “It’s not like we went out and bought all that stuff—it’s just what we had at the time; it’s what we could afford,” says Kuglich.

These days G4 has more than 10 artists on its roster, including up-and-comers Maker, Meaty

Ogre and Mestizo, and they’ve accrued a sizeable fan base. But despite the label’s outward growth, its daily operations are still handled on the cottage industry scale. Kuglich single-handedly takes care of all distribution, management, booking and publicity from his Bay Area apartment. He relocated last year for personal reasons, but still considers G4 a Chicago label.

“When we initially started, it was because we wanted to give people an outlet to actually get their music on record and get it out of Chicago, across the country and world,” he says. “The only thing that’s changed is that now I’m sending out my e-mails from here.”

[www.galapagos4.com](http://www.galapagos4.com)

**WHAT’S YOUR FAVORITE CHICAGO INSTITUTION?** **Jeff Kuglich:** Gramophone Records. When we started (Galapagos) we took our first record there. We were really nervous and we didn’t know if people wanted what to hear we were trying to do as the new kids on the block, but they were really receptive.

# DRAG CITY

A pioneering indie label closes in on its second decade of rock & roll debauchery.

WORDS: SCOTT THILL PHOTO: AUBREY EDWARDS



Rian Murphy at the Drag City office

“Did we really love the music that much? Did we want to get closer to the stars? Were we young and impressionable? Were we hoping to make money? Or were we just sick of our jobs? It was a bit of all of these things—and it happened in 1989.”

So says Drag City’s veteran sales manager Rian Murphy, tongue no doubt screwed securely into his cheek. Truth is, the leftfield Chicago independent has been aiding musical evolution ever since two dudes named Dan (Osborn and Koretzky, to be exact) dumped their promoter gigs and rode the burgeoning DiY boom for all it was worth, along the way propelling alt-rock pioneers like Pavement, Stereolab, Royal Trux, Jim O’Rourke and more into popular consciousness. Since then, Drag City has gone global with bands like Ghost (Japan), Alasdair Roberts (Europe) and more, as well as back in time with reissues of long-lost collections from psych-rock weirdos like Mayo Thompson and Gary Higgins. Which is to say that, if the Drag

City faithful didn’t do it because they love music, they have nevertheless helped carve out its multicultural, cross-genre future.

Murphy is no doubt thinking about the, um, future when he sagely says, “rock ‘n’ roll is for the young...or those who lustfully and semi-legally prey on the young.” But seriously, both young and old alike are raising glasses to the label’s longevity, fortified as it is by able-bodied newcomers like avant-folkie Joanna Newsom and freakout maestro Ben Chasny (Six Organs of Admittance, August Born). Not that Drag City’s heady roster of old-school virtuosos like O’Rourke and David Pajo (Slint, Papa M, Tortoise and into the stratosphere) is anything to sneeze at either.

And finally, how does Drag City feel about the place it calls home? “If cities were women, we wouldn’t call Chicago a whore or anything, but we have our ups and downs with her,” sighs Murphy. “And love her just the same.”

[www.dragcity.com](http://www.dragcity.com)

**WHAT’S YOUR FAVORITE CHICAGO INSTITUTION?** **Rian Murphy:** We’re on medication to keep us out of those places. But if the other shoe ever drops, we’ll let you know.



# NUMERO GROUP

Chicago funk/R&B curators go off the deep end...literally.

WORDS: JESSICA HOPPER



"We take most of our meetings here during the summer, around 10 or 11 feet," says Ken Shipley of Chicago Park District's Olympic-sized pride and joy—Holstein Pool. "We just hang on the side during lap swims. If they had a wireless connection here, we'd be here all the time. We tried once to log on, but there is no signal down here."

Shipley is a founding third of reissues label Numero Group, and this pool is where much of the creative thunder has rumbled. "The sequencing meetings for the Capsoul release were here," he remembers, almost wistfully. "We were humming the songs, trying to figure out the order."

Shipley and partners Rob Sevier and Tom Lunt have quickly turned Numero from a curious boutique outfit into a reissue zeitgeist—garnering raves from casual fans to collectors, from NPR to national mags. Numero brings the forgotten to

the fore with lovingly packaged CD collections of artists known only to deep-crate diggers or those who were around "back in the day." "We started [by] putting together stacks of 45s, sorting 'em by label and talking about how we were going to find these people," says Shipley. Their first choice was Ohio's long-defunct sweet soul label, Capsoul. "In the summer of 2003, we went to Columbus, Ohio and talked to (Capsoul founder) Bill Moss," says Shipley. "He gave us the go, and we've been running with it ever since."

In the last two years, Numero has amassed an impressive and eclectic catalog, spanning from Factory Records also-rans Antena (an all-female French electro-samba band) to reissues from Chicago funk label Bandit to the country gospel of Fern Jones, who was the Patsy Cline of the southern revival tent circuit.

While those releases put them on the map, the next few are positively nuclear. First up is a primer on Belizean funk, where calypso and James Brown meet the hurricane-inflicted diaspora. Then comes a 100-plus track Deep City boxset, chronicling the Miami label, famously helmed by Clarence Reed and Willy Clark, from 1964-68. "The Deep City box started how all of our projects do," explains Shipley. "You finally get your hands on this amazing single, and then think, 'There has got to be more where this came from.' Then you find some discography, and that leads you to this wealth of people. And then, suddenly, you wind up with never-heard-before acetates dug up from Willy Clark's wife's closet."

[www.numerogroup.com](http://www.numerogroup.com)

# DEEPER SOUL RECORDS

A label makes Chicago's jazz roots swing for a new generation.

WORDS: JOSHUA P. FERGUSON PHOTO: AUBREY EDWARDS



Deeper Soul's Josh Deep

Josh Deep has only begun to scratch the surface of all he has in store for his label Deeper Soul. At just over a year in existence it has six releases under its belt including original work and remixes from Osunlade, Henrik Schwarz, Alton Miller, IG Culture and Chicago jazz musician Kahil El Zabar. Already, Deeper Soul is fulfilling its mission: to release genre-defying music that is not only heard but, more importantly, felt.

Josh says that growing up in Chicago has had a heavy influence on his ideology. "Chicago has all these types of music: blues, jazz, house, hip-hop, soul. These experiences [all] incorporated [into] a music I could feel—it was all soulful music to me and I saw an ability to learn from those experiences and create a new sound." This new sound marries modern production to a live jazz aesthetic, as Josh aims "to create a greater synergy between live musicians and studio producers." "The response that we get from that experience needs to happen, and goes beyond articulation," he avows.

As it happens, Deeper Soul is really starting to cook. A slew of releases centered around El Zabar are up next, including a double CD of original material and remixes and an accompanying 12" sampler featuring unreleased tracks. Kahil and the Ethnic Heritage Ensemble are also touring Europe this month, leading up to the Nova Arts Festival in Bordeaux, France. The three-day festival will find the Ethnic Heritage Ensemble performing live with IG Culture and Josh Deep, plus turns by Archie Shepp, Henrik Schwarz, Charles Webster, Djinji Brown and a live painting exhibition from HVW8.

Josh says Chicago has been a necessary catalyst for all these projects, as has his friendship with El Zabar. "When he and I started working together it became very clear that for a period in time this was going to be our future: to have this [relationship] as a vehicle to get music which [Kahil] and I feel has a strong cultural value to more people and to bring groups of like-minded people together."

[www.deepersoulrecs.com](http://www.deepersoulrecs.com)

WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE CHICAGO INSTITUTION? **Numero Group:** Holstein Pool.

WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE CHICAGO INSTITUTION? **Josh Deep:** If I had to try and nail it down it would be either Sonotheque or the Velvet Lounge.





### JESSE DE LA PEÑA

DJing 20 years; smoothbeats.com, Darkroom, Blue Groove Lounge

**The music you play:** Only what moves me, everything from disco that my mom would play to rock 45s to electro, house, hip-hop, reggae and nu-jazz—just about everything except trance. **Upcoming releases:** I have a new project called Trio De La Peña that we are recording now. Also a mix CD called *1331* and an EP on White Beard. **Trivia:** In 1993, I co-founded the Grammy-nominated acid jazz group Liquid Soul along with guitarist Tommy Kline. I was the group's DJ until 1999. [www.bluegroovelounge.com](http://www.bluegroovelounge.com)



### DJ SOLANGE

DJing six years; Threadless, Slappa, Blue Iguana Music

**The music you play:** A cross between Chicago and Italo hard disco. **Upcoming releases:** "You Make Me Feel Good" on Blue Iguana Music and two remixes for Ellee Ven on Hot Sauce Recordings. **Trivia:** I was on a reality show that never aired (*Switched* on ABC Family). I had to live in the Louisiana bayou for a week catching bullfrogs and alligators with my hands while my switch got to DJ at Excalibur here in Chicago. [www.djsolange.com](http://www.djsolange.com)



### JUSTIN LONG

DJing for 15 years; .dotbleep, No Assembly Firm, Smartbar

**The music you play:** Total audio disorder! **Upcoming releases:** A No Assembly Firm EP featuring Heather and Diz on .dotbleep, and No Assembly Firm remixes on Good Family and Robsoul. **Trivia:** My mom gave me her Sex Pistols *Never Mind the Bollocks* and The Clash *London Calling* albums when I was in the fifth grade and it was where the fuel was thrown on the flame. [www.noassemblymusic.com](http://www.noassemblymusic.com)



### BIO-BOOSTER

DJing nine years; The Opaque Project, Newtype Plus, Blazaebly

**The music you play:** Sleazy electro-tech with some unadulterated rock thrown in the mix. Every once in a while, I dust off the old dubs and drop some d&b business. **Upcoming releases:** Next release will be on Detroit's Blazaebly label alongside Chicago's Monologic. **Trivia:** I'm a myspace.com junkie. Someone really needs to tear me away from the computer once in a while! [www.bio-booster.com](http://www.bio-booster.com)



### DJ TRAXX

DJing 19 years; Kode, Indulge at RednoFive, Gigolo, Antennae, Ghostly

**The music you play:** Music with a passion so intense that it overcomes genre divides to weave an altogether original, exciting and multi-textured musical fabric which envelops both the avid clubber and the home listener. **Upcoming releases:** The next Dirty Criminals album for Gigolo in late October and a compilation project of all new tracks on Eskimo in early November. **Trivia:** My beloved pastime is designing clothing for men. [www.kode.org](http://www.kode.org)



### DJ GLYDE

DJing 9 years; BassByThePound, Lava Lounge, Sonotheque

**The music you play:** Classic drum & bass. A mix of early hardstep bits and mid-'90s classics with quality tunes from early 2000s. **Upcoming releases:** Too busy promoting my drum & bass nights (The Seminar, BBP) to produce... **Trivia:** With BassByThePound, I have promoted and produced more than 300 D&B events in Chicago. [www.bassbythepound.com](http://www.bassbythepound.com)

# TOP TEN

Chicago is full of talented DJs. Meet ten of the best.

WORDS: VIVIAN HOST

BACKGROUND PHOTO: CHRISTOPHER WOODCOCK



### KATE SIMKO

DJing on WNUR 89.3 Chicago seven years; Wake Up, Influence, Traum

**The music you play:** An eclectic mix of minimal techno, IDM, experimental house, jazz and downtempo. **Upcoming releases:** I have a remix of Philip Glass out now on his label, OMM. I have a remix of Rebecca Gates set to come out soon as well as a few tracks for Chocolate Industries. **Trivia:** I wrote an essay for the local newspaper and won a trip to NYC when I was seven. It was my first trip outside of Illinois. [www.katesimko.com](http://www.katesimko.com)



### JOHN "BID" SIMMONS

DJing 12 years; Soul Foundation Kollektive, 94 East **The music you play:** Firmly rooted in deep house, with influences of downtempo, neo soul, hip-hop, nu-jazz, funk and soul, '80s dance and electronic. **Upcoming releases:** A mix CD, *Fall Equinox*, is out now. **Trivia:** My father "Big Bob" Simmons was one of Chicago's first mobile DJs and provided sound systems for the legendary Mendel High School parties in the late 1970s and '80s. [www.djjohnsimmons.com](http://www.djjohnsimmons.com)



### REES URBAN

DJing 10 years; Bunchlox, Jackinthebox, Public Housing

**The music you play:** Fun and funky. **Upcoming releases:** "Still Bangin'" and "You Work It! Remixes" on Flux UK, plus stuff on Nerven, Nasty Colour, Abstract, Bunchlox and Jackinthebox. **Trivia:** I have grey hair. [www.reesurban.com](http://www.reesurban.com)



### DJ CASPER

DJing 13 years; SJC, Groove Distribution

**The music you play:** Melodic and soulful broken beat/house and drum & bass. **Upcoming releases:** None at the moment. **Trivia:** I have an urban planning degree from MIT. [www.heavyweightsound.com](http://www.heavyweightsound.com)





# TAKE ME OUT TONIGHT

What Chicago does after dark: a photo essay by  
Matthew Taplinger ([www.nonformat.org](http://www.nonformat.org))



Thursday, August 4th at **The Underground Lounge**: Zach wearing a vintage t-shirt depicting the City of Big Shoulders.

Tuesday, August 9th at the **Hideout**: Barback Nolan Wells downing a quick beer and sharing laughs with friends during a set break by house band Devil in a Woodpile.







Thursday, August 11th at **Fireside Bowl**: Red Eyed Legends' stage set-up being broken down after an opening gig for D.C. band Partyline.

Friday, August 5th at **The Abbey**: Sean and Sumie hanging out in the front bar prior to the Kid 606 show.

Sunday, August 14th at **The Congress Theater**: Broken Cherry of the Double Crossers taking a nasty spill during the second round of the Windy City Rollers derby bout.







Friday, August 12th at the **Empty Bottle**: Tortoise performing a show to benefit the Dax Pierson recovery fund.

Friday, August 5th at **The Darkroom**: Life During Wartime DJs CB, J2K and Mother Hubbard getting the dancefloor movin'.





Winter arrives 9.20.05...

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- MON 10/24 NYC, NY Mercury Lounge
- TUES 10/25 PHILADELPHIA, PA First Unitarian Church
- WED 10/26 BALTIMORE, MD OttoBar
- THUS 10/27 CHAPEL HILL, NC Local 506
- FRI 10/28 ATHENS, GA 40 Watt Club
- SAT 10/29 ATLANTA, GA Drunken Unicorn
- SUN 10/30 JACKSONVILLE, FL Thee Imperial
- MON 10/31 ORLANDO, FL The Social Pavilion
- TUES 11/1 GAINESVILLE, FL Common Grounds
- WED 11/2 TALLAHASSEE, FL The Beta Bar
- FRI 11/4 HOUSTON, TX Mary Jane's Fat Cat
- SAT 11/5 AUSTIN, TX The Parish
- SUN 11/6 SAN ANTONIO, TX White Rabbit
- MON 11/7 DENTON, TX Halley's
- WED 11/9 TUCSON, AZ Plush
- THUS 11/10 SAN DIEGO, CA Casbah
- FRI 11/11 LOS ANGELES, CA Troubadour
- SAT 11/12 SAN FRANCISCO, CA The Independent
- MON 11/14 PORTLAND, OR The Holocene
- TUES 11/15 VANCOUVER, BC Lamplighter
- WED 11/16 SEATTLE, WA Chop Suey
- FRI 11/18 SALT LAKE CITY, UT Kilby Court
- SAT 11/19 DENVER, CO Larimer Lounge
- SUN 11/20 LINCOLN, NE Duffy's Tavern
- MON 11/21 IOWA CITY, IA Gabe's Oasis
- TUES 11/22 MINNEAPOLIS, MN 7th Street Entry
- WED 11/23 MILWAUKEE, WI Onopa Brewing Co.
- FRI 11/25 CHICAGO, IL Logan Square Auditorium
- SAT 11/26 DETROIT, MI Magic Stick
- THUS 12/1 MIAMI, FL Soho Lounge
- SAT 12/3 CLEVELAND, OH Crogg Shop

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ARI UP



**FORGET MASH-UPS, THESE TWO PUNKS PIONEERED THE ART OF DUB-UPS!**

For 30 years, the crashing kick drum and echo chamber squelch of dub have served as a shibboleth for avant-garde pop music—the banner under which leftist British punks, New York rappers, underground electronic producers and Jamaican soul rebels have united. In London at the dawn of the 1980s, Ariane “Ari Up” Forster found in dub reggae the seemingly limitless possibilities for cultural rejection that she had first experienced in The Slits, the groundbreaking punk band she fronted as a teen. Ari, who had toured opening for The Clash before even turning 16, proceeded to delve head first into reggae, first by aiming The Slits in that direction, finally by escaping Thatcher and Reagan in the streets of Jamaica and the jungles of Belize.

Across the Atlantic, Keith LeBlanc was living, and beginning to reject, his own success story: as drummer and percussionist with Sugar Hill Records’ house band, LeBlanc pounded studio skins for such proto-rap hitmakers as Sugar Hill Gang and Grandmaster Flash. But it was in dub’s studio freedom that LeBlanc—under collaborative guises such as Tackhead and Interference and with partners such as On-U honcho Adrian Sherwood and rapper Melle Mel—found his calling. (On-U serves as the common ground between Ari Up, one-time singer for Sherwood’s New Age Steppers, and LeBlanc.)

Now, with popular music looking more and more towards that crucial dub intersection—where punk’s snarl meets hip-hop’s bravado, where funk’s slither slams against electro’s shiver—former On-U label manager Nicolai Beverungen’s Collision label steps up to remind us who went there first. *Stop The Confusion (Global*

## ALBUM REVIEWS 10.05

**ARI UP**  
**DREAD MORE DAN DEAD**  
Collision/GER/CD

**KEITH LEBLANC**  
**STOP THE CONFUSION (GLOBAL INTERFERENCE)**  
Collision/GER/CD

*Interference*, a collection of some of Keith LeBlanc’s finest robotic funk dubs, and *Dread More Dan Dead*, a new set of dub-inspired punky dancehall cuts from Ari Up, hit the zeitgeist square on the jaw with time-tested knowledge. Because if M.I.A.’s beat-obsessed urban Brit mélange and partner Diplo’s world-bounce fusion have immediate precursors, they’re Ari Up and On-U Sound. Similarly, the punk-dubbed shock of LCD Soundsystem and The Juan MacLean’s meandering electro pulse find common ground in LeBlanc’s hymnal—in fact, every neo-dancehall beat and sample-filled percussive culture clash could be compared, on some level, to Ari and Keith.

On *Dread More Dan Dead*, Ari Up—known to the Kingston scene she frequents as Madussa for her thick, chaotic dreads—proves herself a more than capable deejay, toasting on such atypical reggae topics as monogamy. But it’s her signature falsetto quiver and the album’s deep digital beats that provide *Dread* highlights such as “True Warrior” and the gender-role reversal “Young Boy.”

LeBlanc’s collection, *Stop The Confusion*, compiles KLB tracks from across the spectrum of his career—from jazzy drum workouts (“Whatever”) to his better-known sample-heavy industrial collisions (“Technology Works”), from visionary mechanized dubs (“Tackhead Dub”) to straighter soulful cuts (“Green Theory”). This is no greatest hits, nor is it a completists-only affair; rather, it’s a map to the place LeBlanc’s sound holds in the modern-music lineage—one which proves vital. *Justin Hopper*





**HER SPACE HOLIDAY**  
THE PAST PRESENTS THE FUTURE  
Wichita/US/CD

Marc Bianchi's been at it for nearly 10 years—ages before anyone thought to label his sensitive-boy, verse-chorus-verse guitar and drumkit experiments “indietronica,” and certainly before Postal Service swept the nation like so many teenage love notes. As the successor to 2003's *The Young Machines*—which produced HSH's first college radio hit, “My Boyfriend's Girlfriend”—*The Past* finds Bianchi a veritable force. The world is primed for his inner dialogue, a moody outlook he cloaks in fiction and everything's-peachy-keen melodies. On “Weight of the World,” Bianchi works out religious demons through the viewpoint of a housewife who muses “*Now I finally understand/Lesus is like every man/Tells you what you want to hear/Until you fall in love and he disappears.*” Phone messages from loved ones appear at the outset and halfway through, with lyrics like “*misery loves company when company won't call*” interspersed throughout. TMI for some, but those enamored of Bianchi's deadpan whisper will enjoy his present progression. *Rachel Shimp*



**2MEX/SONGODSUNS**  
OVER THE COUNTER CULTURE  
Up Above/US/CD

2Mex has a wildly stylized delivery, full of massive speed fluctuations and serious bellowing which, at best, makes his strictly so-so lyrics indecipherable. The production here is nothing complicated but makes use of some interesting sounds, tossing heavy metal drum breaks into the middle of a creamy hip-hop tracks and accelerating sampled R&B singers to *Chipmunks* velocity. His best rhyme (“*condom/double entendrum*”) is couched in his post-punk track “Lie Love You” and there's something Zappa or Ween-esque about his self-hate in “Didn't Mean to Touch Your Hand.” *Ben Bush*

**A CERTAIN RATIO**  
LIVE AMERICA 1985  
Melodic/UK/CD

Mancunian post-punk/funk group A Certain Ratio stylistically veered from “Love Will Tear Us Apart” to “Love Rollercoaster” in seven years. Named after a Brian Eno song and contemporaries of (yet overshadowed by) Joy Division, this Factory Records group was recorded live to cassette during a 1985 American tour supporting New Order. By this point ACR's performance was only 25 percent menace with 25 percent murk and 50 percent motorik funk akin to Liquid Liquid/ESG; the sax-laden *Live America 1985* fore-

shadows—though thankfully escapes—their descent into lite Latin jazz. *Live* showcases gloom to gleam, low-pitched slither to marshaled percussion, and represents a certain ratio of each of the band's phases. And they even cover New York/Northern Soul disco-funk classic “Shack Up” by Banbarra—now that's range. *Tony Ware*

**ADULT.**  
GIMMIE TROUBLE  
Thrill Jockey/US/CD

Always the hacksawed mohawk to every other electro popper's well coiffed asymmetrical shag, *Gimme Trouble* once again establishes Adam Miller, Nicola Kuperus and recently added guitarist Sam Consiglio as well abreast of the rest, achieving this via a stroll down Eno's Bowery of '78. Where drum machines once bumped booty bass amidst sine waves and familiar bleeps, now it's the last gasps of strangled synths and horrorshow drum machines; in place of Nicola's dispassionate robo-disco vocals, we now get her punk sing shouts. All in all it's an alluringly tactile trouble, invoking chants of “*Gimmie, gimmie!*” *Brian Paul*

**AMMONCONTACT**  
NEW BIRTH  
Ninja Tune/UK/CD

*Ahhhhh.* There's nothing like soaking in Carlos Niño and Fabian Ammon's spare machine funk for an hour or so to clear the War on Terror cobwebs. The kinetic bass of *New Birth* chillers like “A Satellite's Return” and “Omniverses” can send you into a deep trance—the stripped-down grooves of the duo's latest are totally conducive to minimalist mind trips, wherever you're taking them. Things pick up somewhat when rapper Lil Sci pontificates in earnest about race and reparations on “My People,” but *New Birth*, Ammoncontact's first joint for Ninja Tune, is a mostly laid-back affair with beats to spare. *Scott Thill*

**JOHN ARNOLD**  
STYLE AND PATTERN  
Ubiquity/US/CD

The Eddie Van Halen of broken beat is back and he's got the grooves on lockdown. Seriously, Detroit's favorite axe man is more than up to the task of equaling his stellar debut album as he tightens his focus to 10 slices of funk for the floor. A rubbery, anaconda-huge bassline plus Ty on the mic for the title track? Massive. Crispy-fried MPC beats plus Randolph's honey croon on “Rise Up”? Huge. “La Cocina” (a track born from live improv that was added at the last minute) could have been left off, but with the added bonus of Mr. Scruff and Henrik Schwarz's remixes of “Inside,” this is not to be missed. *Peter Nicholson*

**AUTECHRE & THE HAFLER TRIO**  
AE03 & 3HAE  
Die Stadt/GER/CD

In a complex, droning universe, this extrasensory collaboration may serve as an artistic insight into our understanding of time and space. Limited to 1,000 copies, this two-disc excursion into the world of concrete music bleeps and screeches its way into the psyche, leaving any listener jetlagged and out of breath. While at its root quite noisy, the second installment from these experienced avant-garde icons exists as a carefully honed addition to the future of interpretive music. All in all, few sparse and droning records are impossible to ignore. This is one of them. *Fred Miketa*

**BEAUTIFUL SKIN**  
EVERYTHING, ALL THIS AND MORE  
GSL/US/CD

Stemming from Nick Forte (Computer Cougar, Rorschach), Beautiful Skin is no hardcore or punk outfit. Filled with a reverence for Kraftwerk and the ambiance of Eno, *Everything, All This and More* streams evocative waves of darkened-synth fervor and guitar-laden psychedelia accompanied by the looping asunder of vintage drum machines. Although compiled from tracks recorded between 1998 and 2001, Beautiful Skin invokes a moody, refreshing mystique that is as gripping now as it was seven years ago. *Everything, All This and More* is earnestly crafted and will challenge any disciple of decadent noise or modern New Wave. *Fred Miketa*

**ERALDO BERNOCCHI + HAROLD BUDD**  
MUSIC FOR FRAGMENTS FROM THEINSIDE  
Sub Rosa/US/CD

Originally recorded as the musical accompaniment to PM Koma's video installation of same name, *Fragments* is an equally powerful experience out of context. Budd's subdued chording and stripped down structures engage the ebb and flow of Bernocchi's subliminal texturing, elastic vocal splices and sparse percussive programming with a cool, haunting touch. The tracks, named by number, incorporate

elements of dub, jazz and even trip-hop, but only as a mild reference point in an otherwise amorphous daydream. Image-evoking in its own solemn state, *Fragments* is a projection of virtual light through the mind's eye. *Doug Morton*

**CESAR COMANCHE**  
SQUIRREL AND THE ACES  
ABB/US/CD  
EDGAR ALLEN FLOE  
TRUE LINKS  
MCEO/US/CD

North Cackalack's Justus League has an incestuous orgy going on of the sonic variety. Khrysis and 9th Wonder handle most of Cesar Comanche's beats, with the latter forgoing his usual soul sampling in favor of bubbly harmonizing on the feisty opener “Get Ready.” Overall, though, a full deck of crew cameos drowns Cesar out. Colleague Edgar Allen Floe, who appears on “Miss You (Remix),” reaps the benefits of brevity with half as many tracks on *True Links*. His sizeable baritone blends into the haunting vocals of “I For an I” while the limited guestlist proves that a good team's individual players also pack game. *Aqua Boogie*

**CLUE TO KALO**  
ONE WAY, IT'S EVERY WAY  
Mush/US/CD

Sometimes when your heart is bruised you have to circle the wagons, so to speak. So an elliptical album (bookended by “The Younger the Old” and “The Older the Young”) isn't a stretch for mortality-minded Australian Mark Mitchell on his second full-length of idyll symmetrics. Under the name Clue to Kalo, Mitchell presents the soft-focus, sun-dappled folksy jangle of melodic, melancholic laptop loops atop which linger the kind of hushed first-person versus personal tug-of-war familiar to fans of Elliott Smith and Death Cab for Cutie. If earth is just the rug underneath which our dead shed skin and unsure first steps are swept, *One Way, It's Every Way* is the dewy nostalgia that keeps the fabric evergreen. *Tony Ware*

**CONTINENTAL**  
WHAT WAS GAINED FROM WHAT WAS LOST  
U-Dot/US/CD

Post-rock junkies like me can never get enough of bands like Continental, who lie somewhere between The Six Parts Seven and The Album Leaf on the genre's experimental Richter scale. In other words, instrumental compositions like “Sown,” “Ghost War” and “August Ends” are crystalline beauties that descend only barely into noise, begging the question: “What would Mogwai think?” Sure, the album closer “Pillow Talk” tears up structure a bit, but then a somber, hushed affair like “No Shorty” evens everything out. Bottom line? Continental may not like distortion pedals too much, but they still know how to make guitars cry. *Scott Thill*

**DDAY ONE**  
LOOP EXTENSIONS  
Content/GER/CD

Time flies when listening to LA-based hip-hop producer DDay One—though it's hard to say whether that's a good thing. The man claims to be a vinyl packrat, and it shows in his production, which is loaded up with a voluptuous array of jazzy instrumental samples: a warm contrabass loop here (“If Eyes Were Ears”), an emotive piano snippet there (“Second Set”). But aside from a burst of double-stepping energy in the vocal track “Unstable Material 2,” the album keeps a lackadaisical pace mired in trip-hop conventionality. Too often, the balance between understated and unremarkable is off-center. *Anna Balkrishna*

**DJ KOZE**  
KOSI COMES AROUND  
Kompakt/GER/CD

There's a fine line between using studio technology well and getting too knob-happy. German Stefan Kozalla—a.k.a. DJ Kozé—mostly keeps on the right side on his debut artist album, but occasionally sticks a toe too far out. “Don't Feed the Cat,” for one, would have been better if he'd reined himself in a bit, and “Chiminea” comes off maudlin. But overall, the minimalist tech-house here—whether emphasizing artificial sounds or ruthlessly manipulated natural ones—works. The highlight is the already-released “Brutalga Square,” with its amazingly danceable little cymbals, but other tracks show promise for future albums. *Luciana Lopez*

**DMX KREW**  
MANY WORLDS  
Rephlex/UK/2LP

Ed DMX's array of aliases (Computer Rockers, Mandroid) invoke an alabaster museum of electro/freestyle tributes. If you've visited that museum, his latest sprawling manifesto of genre-obliterating artistry will come as little surprise. From eloquently layered Detroit-isms to good old fashioned IDM noodles to a hilariously genius deadpan-voiced history lesson on William the Conqueror set to a plodding electro beat, *Many Worlds* must establish Ed DMX as one of the foremost cherished resources of electronic music ingenuity. *Brian Paul*

**DOORMOUSE**  
MAJOR CHANGES  
Sublight/CAN/CD

Imagine someone recording a baby smacking around a sampler and a drum machine dangling over his or her crib and you might get a rough idea of *Major Changes*. Breakcore vet Dan Doormouse samples candid gibberish and laughter from a tyke and stitches them with rhythms and tacky melodies that behave like toy cars needing to be pulled back to briefly work. This formula works wonders on “Lulu” and “Kayita,” where hip-hop beats verge on shattering into choke-sized pieces. Elsewhere, Doormouse teases the listener with rhythms and noises that build up to absolutely nothing. Ah, childhood ADD is quite pitiful. *Cameron Macdonald*



**DANGER DOOM**  
THE MOUSE AND THE MASK  
Epitaph/US/CD

Big ups, *Adult Swim!* Not only has Cartoon Network's groundbreaking animation bloc turned out some of the best popcult television since MTV killed *Liquid Television*, but it has thrown its weight behind one of the best releases of the year. Where else are you going to hear MF Doom (who's quickly becoming indie-hop's collab champ) name-drop the brilliant *Harvey Birdman: Attorney at Law* in a rhyme? Exactly. Hot off a recent beat-jacking streak with Gorillaz and the brainy grift of Jay-Z known as *The Grey Album*, Dangermouse mans the decks ably, keeping the frenetic beats steamrolling beneath Doom's resin-soaked baritone on blazing tracks like “El Chupa Nibre,” “Old School” (featuring Talib Kweli) and “The Mask,” a team-up with Ghostface. Awash in rampant banality, the bling metaverse should study this joint up and down. Because they must learn. Grab this shit and spin it silly. *Scott Thill*





**FEATHERS**  
**ABSOLUTE NOON**  
Homotapes/US/EP

Tortoise fans should take note of this Miami-based group, which accurately captures the sound and pastoral vibes of the post-rock legends circa *TNT*. Perhaps having band member John McEntire involved in the project—he’s credited for “Programming & Tone Shaping”—was a slight influence. It’s not that *Absolute Noon*, the first in a series of three EPs, doesn’t have tight, original arrangements or its share of pretty moments, it just doesn’t add much new to the formula. Unless Feathers adds some new tricks to future EPs, this band isn’t going to take flight. *Patrick Sisson*



**FERENC**  
**FRAXIMAL**  
Kompakt/GER/CD

It would be hard for Spanish duo Ferenc to top their ‘03 hit “Yes Sir I Can Hardcore”—and they don’t. *Fraximal* isn’t bad—its 10 synth-layered technotracks are solid enough—but it lacks “Hardcore”’s brilliance. Opener “Diplodocus” sets an ambient tone that grows steadily more beat-conscious as the album progresses, but many of the

tracks never quite differentiate themselves enough from each other. The results are mixed: “Vinagreta,” with its swooshing ocean noises, feels forced, but “Urdangarin Resistance” and “Neng” get deeper, grittier and much better. *Luciana Lopez*

**THE FIVE CORNERS QUINTET**  
**CHASIN’ THE JAZZ GONE BY**  
Milan/US/CD

For ears raised on breakbeat-fractured future jazz, ‘60s jazz can seem staid, but those LPs represent a burning quest for musical perfection through improvisation and composition. That fire burns in Helsinki’s Five Corners Quintet, who bop so hard you can almost hear starched white collars being popped and square-rimmed glasses fogging up behind the studio window. Whether it’s vibes, sax or legendary hard-bop hipster vocalist Mark Murphy (voicing three tunes, belying his 70-plus years!) taking the lead, these youngsters revive classic soul/Latin fusion with a passion that will make you think jazz’s greatest era never ended. *Rob Geary*

**JASON FORREST**  
**SHAMELESSLY EXCITING**  
Sonig/GER/CD

Subtlety isn’t in Jason Forrest’s vocabulary. Like Yello, he’s gotta say yes to another (absurd) excess. Last year’s *The Unrelenting Songs of the 1979 Post Disco Crash* flaunted Forrest’s diabolical plunderphonic flow, as he transmuted snippets from wack arena rockers, sacred/putrid classic-rock cows and faceless disco groups into spazzy sampladelic gold. *Shamelessly Exciting* further refines Forrest’s brazen copyright-flouting and deft daftness. This time he’s merging stadium prog, punk, New Wave, ‘60s psychedelia and smooth jazz with hyper jungle beats and rampant DSP abuse. Dude offers at least 30 thrills a minute, making *Shamelessly Exciting* truth in titling, not hubris. *Dave Segal*

**GENTOO**  
**HYOSHI**  
Simulacra/US/CD

Gentoo’s debut can be seen as the study of an infinite moment. At least one song, “A Million Coins,” takes inspiration from Zen poetry, setting the album’s meditative mood. Ethereal as Arovane, Gentoo’s work is also of the earth. Synth tones on “Nooumena” and “Quip” meander like a flute and koto, while the title track heralds a thunderstorm with electrical sparks and the buzz of frogs. “Creek” is a recollection of leaving the woods for the world, amid the claustrophobic sound of being lost inside both. Like nature’s grandeur, Gentoo’s sometimes heavy-handed flourishes can be overwhelming. It’s the individual details—and the ways he describes them through sound—that are singularly beautiful. *Rachel Shimp*

**ROBIN GUTHRIE & HAROLD BUDD**  
**MYSTERIOUS SKIN**  
Commotion/US/CD

We live in a world in which death is imminent, misery is routine and heartbreak is far more common than triumph. Fortunately, Robin Guthrie of Cocteau Twins fame and ambient pioneer Robin Budd have conjured the beauty of our wretched condition with *Mysterious Skin*. This haunting soundtrack is consumed with hazy, processed guitars of the dreariest proportions combined with an atmosphere so serene and dreamy, you can actually feel the interpersonal melancholy that connects us all. Guthrie and Budd have surpassed any preconceptions in this existentially powerful score. Pray for more. *Fred Miketa*

**I SELF DIVINE**  
**SELF DESTRUCTION**  
Rhymesayers/US/CD

I Self Divine, frontman for the always-engaging rap group Micranots, finally sheds the burden of group members and a shared spotlight. On *Self Destruction*, Divine rhymes alone over an array of beats provided by Vitamin D, Jake One, Bean One and Atmosphere beatsmith Ant, and uses the extra space productively. Tracks like “Sunshine,” “Overthrow” and “This Is It” display an introvert who can loudly speak his mind if the mood is right. *Self Destruction* further solidifies Rhymesayers Entertainment’s niche for quality hip-hop. *David Ma*

**CHELONIS R. JONES**  
**DISLOCATED GENIUS**  
Get Physical/GER/CD

A poet, painter and musician who’s lived in Europe for a decade, New York expatriate Jones is a renaissance man, with *Dislocated Genius* his first electronic full-length. The album’s best cuts have had previous lives: the deliciously neo-

disco “One & One” and tech-house kiss-off “I Don’t Know,” which was released in 2003 and remixed by Justus Köhncke. (These songs so impressed Röyksopp, they tapped Jones’ funky, Prince-inflected vocal style for *The Understanding’s* “49%.”) *Dislocated* is Jones’ canvas, and through his portraits of racism and cliché (“Blackface”) and his disillusionment with consumer culture (“NaNaNa”), he shows there’s a complex man beneath these body-rocking beats. *Rachel Shimp*

**JUMBONICS**  
**SUPER-BAXOPHONE**  
Tru Thoughts/UK/CD

Had Matt Smooth and Rob Mac scratched up a copy of their *Super-Baxophone* album and slid it into an unsuspecting crate at some vinyl emporium, groove-sample and library-music freaks would be selling their homes for the eBay bid dosh. With Jumbonics, the Speeka duo explores a shared love for half-cheesy ‘60s organ sounds; these get layed over hip-hop beats fresh enough to turn heads, but subtle enough to be Richard Lester montage-scene material. *S-B* expands upon the original “Jumbonics” EP’s slick, urbane, jazzy funk with a smile that belies a dirty little secret. *Justin Hopper*

**KOBOL**  
**BROKEN EBONY**  
Static Discos/MEX/CD

I thought Mathew Herbert had the patent on dissected jazz cut-ups, but Kobol proves me wrong. The Nortec Collective duo’s debut arrives on Static Discos, Mexico’s most important techno label, which is fast becoming a trendsetter in modern electronic music. Kobol does for jazz what fellow countryman Murcof does for symphonic classical music—marrying instrumental fragments with intricate, stop/start grooves. And similar to the *noir* jazz slither of ~scape label’s Andrew Pekler, or Burnt Friedman’s tension-filled jazz concoctions, Kobol’s microscopic beats inhabit the shadows in the wee small hours. A very comfortable place indeed. *Tomas Palermo*

**KONONO NO.1**  
**CONGOTRONICS**  
Ache/CAN/CD

Sometimes the worst of conditions and places can produce humanity’s best music. Konono No.1 is about making oneself heard through a dictator’s fortress wall, the out-of-tune symphonies of street life and ancestral ghosts. The Congolese orchestra drives to a beat chiseled out of car parts and pots and pans, while centering on an amplified *likembé* (thumb piano) to lead them into trances. The jams collected here have a simplicity that is so dense and raw that the music swelters from the body heat of a thousand on a dirt street. Cutting through the bustle are the *likembé*’s melodies, which have a tattered electricity that haunts for days on end. *Cameron Macdonald*

**KOOL KEITH**  
**LOST MASTERS VOLUME 2**  
DMAFT/US/CD

Former Ultramagnetic alum Kool Keith should have called this album *The Emancipation of Kool Keith* because this the Keith cats love: the pimp, the international zone coaster, the best MC in the whole wide world! *Lost Masters 2* has all them funky ass records like “Feel About You,” “Star Struck” and “Can’t F\*\*k With This,” an array of darts formatted for fans. If you don’t know Corporal Keith already—the only G that would pose on an album cover with a mask and Speedos—I’m not the one to break his style down. His music is mostly filth and trash talking. If you hate the rap industry and need some tough love therapy, listen to this right after you find out what the number one song is this week on Billboard. *Cokni O’Dire*

**LAL**  
**WARM BELLY, HIGH POWER**  
Public Transit/CAN/CD

Around the time trip-hop went incognito as “downtempo,” boy-girl duo LAL dropped *Comers*, a breaks-and-vocals effort that unjustly vanished. Five years on, *Warm Belly, High Power* sends Rosina Kazi’s lush and nuanced vocals through a conceptual tour of Southeast Asia across the four seasons. Nick Murray keeps the beats up to the high standards of today’s future jazz programming—check the warped shuffle of “Dancing the Same,” the winding bass and negative space in “Creep” or the softly evolving slow-mo jungle dub “Brown Eyed Warrior”—while deftly integrating guest percussionists on tablas, sitars and more. Hot like slow summer nights. *Rob Geary*

**LIGHTHEADED**  
**WRONG WAY**  
Tres/US/CD

“Relax, kick back, you had a long day/ we’re taking you everywhere except the wrong way,” relays this animated Portland, OR based trio on the title track of their sophomore album. MCs Braille, Othello and MC/beatsmith Ohmega Watts encourage listeners to unwind to their upbeat hip-hop, which readily inspires head nodding, finger popping and, on occasion, floor rocking (see the pulsating, b-boy-friendly cut “In The Building”). With their pleasing rhythm and uplifting raps, Lightheaded does a commendable job in ensuring that each of their listeners has a good day. *Max Herman*

**LITTLE BROTHER**  
**THE CHITLIN CIRCUIT 1.5**  
Fastlife-EQ/US/CD

“This rap shit is chess, not Connect 4...” LB has got that right, but this collection of remixes and B-sides is a bit of a stalemate at that. On one side of the board, you’ve got tracks like “War,” with a tense balance between Phonte and Big Pooh’s rolling banter and 9th Wonder’s rumbling beats and perfectly haunting samples. On the other side, you have the jerky lyrical bombast of “Flash and Flare,” where Phonte and Pooh’s braggadocio falls hollow. But sit tight until the final track, where the pair’s raw chemistry and 9th Wonder’s blend of bang and sweet soul will have you counting the days until their real sophomore album drops. *Peter Nicholson*

**FREDDIE MCGREGOR**  
**COMIN’ IN TOUGH**  
VP-Big Ship/US/CD

The title *Comin’ In Tough* makes Freddie McGregor’s latest release sound like the offerings from a mean-mugging gangster rapper. But the roots and lover’s rock legend, now in his 40th year in the business, is more like Common and less like The Game. Socially redemptive tunes include “Bangarang” (patois for commotion) and “Lock it Down,” where Freddie frowns on bad-man-ism: “All those crazy talk dem a carry roun’ town/ Right ya now we come to lock that down.” Unfortunately, a cover of The Five Stairsteps’ “Ooh Child” misses, but link-ups with Anthony B and Morgan Heritage make up for it. Tuff, but smooth. *Araya Crosskill*

**MEDINA GREEN**  
**FUNKY FRESH IN THE FLESH & MORE**  
Illson Media/US/CD

It’s true that these days, Mos Def is known more as a Hollywood actor than an underground hip-hop artist. It’s all the more notable, then, that his early indie hip-hop crew Medina Green still flourishes today, consisting of Def, his brother DCQ, their cousin Magnetic and longtime homies Lord Ato and Jah Born. Medina’s newest collection draws upon lean, old school, Native Tongue-esque stylings and deeply introspective raps, both of which keenly embrace an intellectual flow. Check out the affectionate cut “Momma Said,” a heartfelt call to young people to better themselves despite their most humbling circumstances. *Janet Tzou*



ASSASSIN

**ASSASSIN**  
**INFILTRATION**  
VP/US/CD

On his full-length debut, Assassin knocks out the competition with his lyrical boomshots and rope-a-dope beats. Under the tutelage of Penthouse Studios owner/producer Donovan Germain, the 22-year old Jamaican has developed into one of the island’s most promising dancehall artists. This lyrically gifted deejay brings a street reporter’s eye for detail to tracks like the autobiographical “Gangsta City” and the MLK-inspired “Free at Last”. He teams up with reggae legend Freddie McGregor to unite the generations in the soul-stirring “Youth Well Cold.” From the confrontational “Step Pon Dem” to the radio-friendly “Let Me Know,” featuring Chi-town’s Syleena Johnson, Assassin demonstrates versatility, successfully walking the line between street credibility and commercial viability. *James Mayo*



YUKIHIRO FUKUTOMI

**YUKIHIRO FUKUTOMI**  
**EQUALITY**  
Pantone/UK/CD

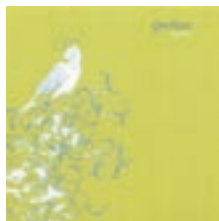
Fukutomi’s long career in house shows in the sharp production and well-planned pacing on his ninth album. Though the tracks mostly share a warm, vocal house vibe, Fukutomi’s been at this long enough to make an album that’s coherent without being bland. The title track, for example, features spoken word vocals from Rich Medina so deep they could be the track’s bassline, while “All Over The World” rises from a laid-back funk foundation; the more tech-leaning “The Tambour” drives a bit harder without upsetting the album’s balance. But Fukutomi knows when to keep things simple, too, as in “Killing Time,” about two minutes of quiet synths—no beats, no vocals, no bassline—that somehow shift the album’s whole mood. *Luciana Lopez*





**MESTIZO AND MIKE GAO**  
**BLINDFAITH**  
Galapagos4/US/CD

Not unlike many of his Galapagos4 label-mates, Mestizo opts to create hip-hop of the overcast and apocalyptic variety. And considering the current state of affairs in the world, he aptly keeps the vigilance going on his sophomore release, *Blindfaith*. But this album isn't entirely gloomy—new beatsmith Mike Gao counterbalances the darkness with occasionally bouncy output, as on the swing-styled "Pick Up 52's." Whatever the mood at hand, these beats and rhymes maintain a level of natural intricacy that requires nothing less than full attentiveness. *Max Herman*



**MIDAIRCONDO**  
**SHOPPING FOR IMAGES**  
**RYAN TEAGUE**  
**SIX PRELUDES**

Type/UK/CD  
Electronica just doesn't quite cut it, and surely I'm supposed to be able to tell you what does instead. As Type continues to expand the nuanced boundaries of electronic music, it reveals that the traditional means of encountering and labeling music are subtly shifting. For example, Swedish trio Midaircondo's gauze-covered blown instruments rise to dizzying zeniths; their processed and reverbed aural abstractions and echoed vocals soar to devastating effect. The UK's Ryan Teague draws from his classical training for six pieces of evocative and gorgeous chamber music, where



strings bounce off prosceniums for eternity. If names matter anymore, perhaps these recordings should be dubbed "post-electronica." *Brion Paul*

**MOCHIPET**  
**FEEL MY CHINA, VOLUME 1**  
**XILLON**  
**PREQUIEM**  
Component/US/CD

Mochipet runs naked through the streets, while Xillon only emerges from a cave at night. Daly City's David "Mochipet" Wang remixes a slew of breakcore and anti-IDM compatriots like Donna Summer, Drop The Lime and Duran Duran on *Feel my China*—he mainly sticks to shoving the originals down 50 flights of stairs. The accidents are a gas to hear, but become too fetishistic to bear after an hour of abuse. Xillon also indulges in splattercore fits, but melodically imbues his work with a gloom that lasts long after the CD is over. "Snow Gear" and "Acid Panda Laptop Death" are prime acid funk that saw no sunlight for years. Mochipet awakens the next morning in the drunk tank, while Xillon disappears in a black cloud. *Cameron Macdonald*

**MOUSE ON MARS**  
**LIVE 04**

Sonig/GER/CD  
Typical electronic concert albums are either lazy, carbon copies of studio-made tracks or improvised messes for the brave to sit through. Post-techno stars Mouse on Mars have achieved a happy balance between the two extremes on *Live 04*. As their Deleuze-drugged jabber about rhizomes and "bodies without organs" hints, they couldn't release a mere concert tape—instead, they meshed together bits of their top performances from hundreds of hours of recordings. The results—created with guitar, bass, keys and a trapkit—are striking as they give their oldies wider breathing spaces and greater spontaneity. "Diskdusk" and "Wipe That Sound" are funkier and more unhinged, while "All The Old Powers" melts out of the stereo. Despite risks of Basement Jaxx-like big-beat schmaltz, MoM is still full of too many good ideas after more than a decade of existence. *Cameron Macdonald*

**MUTAMASSIK**  
**MASRI MOKASSAR: DEFINITIVE WORKS**  
Sound Ink/US/CD

Mutamassik beat juggles hip-hop rhythms, pounding heavy metal drum riffs and hand percussion. In the context of arty techno, sampled Middle Eastern strings often come across as melodramatic and new-agey, but Mutamassik's aggressive, loosely arranged compositions are largely able to avoid hippie raver pratfalls. On the standout track "War Booty," the melody is peeled away to reveal a rhythm formed of grunts and subconsciously small snippets of funk keyboard. The album seems imbued with the horrors of war, most noticeably in its machine gun snares and rhythms built from the whoop-whooping of helicopter blades. *Ben Bush*

**NICKODEMUS**  
**ENDANGERED SPECIES**  
Wonderwheel/US/CD

With Turntables On The Hudson six years strong, pioneering Brooklynite Nickodemus drops his first solo effort. Comprising over a decade of international influence—touching the Balkans, Africa, Latin America, Arabia, Jamaica and more—*Endangered Species* is a soulful collection of bouncing vocals and melodies embedded in serious grooves. Malik from Real Live Show, Radio Mundial's Jean Shepherd and Si\*Se's Carol C add verbal dynamite over a cornucopia of global instrumentation that could only call NYC home. The clear and present winner is the clarinet/melodica-driven "Crazy Stranger," as watery and flowing as the riverside associated with Nick's name. *Derek Beres*

**NUMBERS**  
**WE'RE ANIMALS**  
Kill Rock Stars/US/CD

Not content to continue their herky-jerky garage dance quickies, Numbers holds down the buttons this time instead of tapping them repeatedly. The trio has grown up a little: instead of lashing out on occasion, Dave Broekema's guitar now crunches out a downbeat drone, only intermittently poking up for little broken-string flourishes. Indra Dunis' drums stop and start with abandon, and occasionally hand over their place in the mix to Eric Landmark's groaning Moogs. There are shades of old, funky, two-minute Numbers here, but now they share space with noise and epic drones. It's a mess, but a compelling one. *Rob Geary*

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**BROADCAST**  
**TENDER BUTTONS**  
Warp/UK/CD

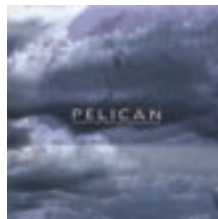
Like shortwave radio monologues listened to intently in a vintage Godard film, Broadcast's *Tender Buttons* is both washed out yet central and commanding. Inspired by the minimalist drone of French library music, as diffused through haunted capacitors, this British group—now pared to the duo of Trish Keenan and James Cargill—casts autumnal, emotionally self-contained vignettes on their third full-length (not counting 1997's singles collection). The Teutonic frostiness of *The Velvet Underground* and *Nico* hovers above ring-modulated modern handshaking trills, but this music is filtered a touch more through early '80s 8-bit workstations than '60s psyche-rock oscillators. With sparse clusters of drum machine and processed synths replacing live percussion, the sequences are scratchy and linear, sullen and frayed, while the breathy vocals are heavy-lidded folk. *Buttons* is a Criterion collection celebrating something not overtly active, but slowly unfurling until fully activating. *Tony Ware*





**PELICAN**  
**THE FIRE IN OUR THROATS WILL BECKON THE THAW**

Hydra Head/US/CD  
Before metal hardens and becomes rigid and unyielding, there is a point during its manufacturing when it takes the form of a slowly moving, blistering liquid. This is the sound of Pelican. While comparisons to metal bands like Isis and Dysrhythmia are occasionally appropriate, this talented Chicago instrumental quartet fabricates a much thicker and melodic form of post-rock more akin to Austin's Explosions In The Sky and sometimes channeling the awesome guitar drone of short-lived Windy City heroes Hum ("Stars"). Marked by seven epic tracks of constantly morphing dynamics, *The Fire in Our Throats*... is yet another triumphant interpretation of classical music catered specifically for the aging mosh pit-and-devil-horns set. *Steve Marchese*



**PORTABLE VERSION**  
~scape/GER/CD

Pulling no proverbial punches and deftly delivering just what you need, ~scape issues another opus of majestic electro dub. The distinctive difference with Portable's Alan Abraham lies in his treatments of Leo Fernandez's guitar—owing to his South African roots, he meshes it with fragments of African percussion. His background is most notable on the tribal "Ebb And Flow," the polyrhythmic "Thought in Action" and the aural downpour of "Typhoon," although a few tracks lack the scintillating charisma of *Version's* apexes. With luck, the next version shall remedy this. *Brion Paul*



**THE PROCUSSIONS**



**TREVA WHATEVA**  
**MUSIC'S MADE OF MEMORIES**

Ninja Tune/ UK/CD  
Carefree, quirky and more than a bit twisted, Treva Whateva's got the cure for stuffy clubs full of stiffs holding up the walls. Taking a break from lending a hand to Grand Central's *Mystic Brew* compilations, Trev lets fly with a passel of party rocking joints that cover several genres better than specialists. From the shiny disco vibes of "Driving Reign" to the absurdly infectious piano and vocal hoe-down of "Singalaong" to the skanking drum & bass of "Dedicated VIP," Whateva works his samples and loops for all they're worth. *Music's Made of Memories* isn't completely perfect ("Havana Ball" is about as clunky as its punning name) but the occasional misstep is overshadowed by refreshing enthusiasm. Drop the pose and have yourself damn good time—Treva Whateva's got yer tunes. *Peter Nicholson*

**UP ALL NIGHT**

Miclife/JPN/CD  
The set-up: one night, one mic, one studio, live drums, live Fender Rhodes, J-Skills of the Sound Providers (a.k.a. Stro the 89th Key) on the kit, the keys and the boards, and a few guests invited for a late night jam session, complete with freestyles and (presumably) Heinekens and hydro aplenty. Basically, if you like The Roots (up to *Illadelph Halflife*), Breakestra, Project Blowed, Freestyle Fellowship, Roy Ayers or Dr. Lonnie Smith, you'll be in love with The ProcuSSIONS, who nail that mellow old-school soul-jazz vibe right down to the yellowed, faded album art. *Up All Night* isn't an especially danceable project, but it's as comfortable as a familiar couch for those blissful chill out sessions. *Eric K. Arnold*

**PUBLIC ENEMY FEATURING PARIS**  
**REBIRTH OF A NATION**

Guerrilla Funk/US/CD  
Being one of the most paramount rap groups of all time means that the standard you've set is your worst competition. On the track "Rise" and throughout the album, Public Enemy's Chuck D still *"reps like he's possessed by Malcolm X"* Yet *Rebirth* lacks the Bomb Squad's beautifully chaotic production and the sense of urgency it garnered. Paris's beats fall short of Shocklee & Co.'s creations, and the album's MC guest list is unnecessarily full. Though Chuck D is still the wiser and Flava Flav continues to be one-of-a-kind, *Rebirth* pales in comparison to PE's brilliant backcatalog. *David Ma*

**PUMPKINHEAD**  
**ORANGE MOON OVER BROOKLYN**

SoulSpazm/US/CD  
On Pumpkinhead's full-length debut, this once battle-ready rapper proves that he's graduated from the corner cipher and is ready to take on focused subject matter. Rocking hard over the crisp beats of Marco Polo, Pumpkinhead keeps his wordplay sharp yet graspable throughout. From challenging our war-hungry government ("Grenades") to pondering the course and possibilities of his life ("Anything"), he presents a fairly well-rounded effort. But more than anything, this album is a testament to Pumpkinhead's undying dedication to hip-hop. As he tells all the cynics on the cut "Here," *"You'll never relate to my blood, sweat and tears."* *Max Herman*

**RECLOSE**  
**HIATUS ON THE HORIZON**

Peacefrog/UK/CD  
Living on the edge of the earth in Wellington, New Zealand serves Matt "Recloose" Chicoine's creative juices well. His acclaimed 2002 release *Cardiology* brought the classic "Ain't Changin'" (with Justin "Just One" Chapman) onto grateful dancefloors everywhere. *Hiatus On The Horizon* boasts another stellar single, "Dust" (featuring Dallas from Fat Freddy's Drop), also destined for legendary status. The strength of *Hiatus* lies in collaborations with Chapman, vocalist Genevieve Marentette and an immensely talented cadre of Wellington musicians. Overall, *Hiatus* lacks a little spark, but the exceptional musicianship makes it worth adding to your collection. *Emmerald*

**SI\*SE**  
**MORE SHINE**

Fuerte/US/CD  
Four years after their 100,000+ selling debut, Brooklyn-based Si\*Se returns with nostalgic evolution. The eclectic band, led by vocalist Carol C and programmer U.F.Low, adds a touch of class to their forward-thinking, Latin-tinged electronica. Soulful soundscapes painted by violins, percussion and hearty basslines serve as beautifully produced backdrops to Carol's lyrics. Her combination of passion and softness and her tranquil poetry—which flows as if heated by an internal, inquisitive burning—make the heart melt. The punchy drums of the title track, the crushing disco of "Agua" and "Karma" and the *son*-flavored spice of "Mariposa En Havana" (a Buena Vista headnod to the original Nickodemus & Osiris cut) glow with a luminosity certain to shine for some time. *Derek Beres*

**SISTER GERTRUDE MORGAN**  
**KING BRITT PRESENTS: SISTER GERTRUDE MORGAN**

Ropeadope/US/CD  
New Orleans: where voodoo challenges Catholicism for affection; where people visit for the graveyards and stay for the funerals. Only here could Sister Gertrude Morgan, a folk artist and self-professed "bride of Christ," spend 20 years singing in the streets only to have an album produced by hip-hop auteur King Britt a quarter-century after her death. Utilizing Morgan's legendary sole 1968 recording, Britt





concocts a seemingly preordained experiment: slide guitar and broken beats, blurping basslines and Morgan's shamanistic tambourine all surround the ghostly incantations of a truly unique voice. Not always successful, but at its finest moments—such as “Power”—truly transcendent. *Justin Hopper*

**SIZZLA**  
**SOUL DEEP**

Greensleeves/UK/CD  
Increasingly quirky and unpredictable, half the fun of listening to a new Sizzla album is hearing what he's gonna do next. By now, we're all familiar with his Bobo dread steez, so it's expected that he's gonna drop some conscious lyrics, positive messages and otherwise honor-rebel sentiments. But while some ragga deejays never vary their flow, Sizzla switches his tone, cadence and pitch constantly, making what could have been a claustrophobic listening experience—Donovan Bennett's riddims tend toward the minimal—into something else entirely. Sizzla's yelps, squeals and falsetto trills keep things interesting, and “Good Morning” and “Mount Zion” can safely be added to the Kalonji catalogue of classics. *Eric K. Arnold*

**THE SOCIETY**  
**ELECTRONIC BIONIC**

Freestyle/UK/CD  
Too many future jazz albums depend on electronic gimmickry to pull off their sound. But what makes *Electronic Bionic* so much better is the sense that the people behind the tracks are accomplished musicians with an ear for getting past labels and limits. “Human Nature,” for example, has both vocals chock full of soul as well as swelling synths, “High Jive” features jazz sax against crackling sounds, and “Keep Your Head Up” sounds as if Kosheen had been bred on Philly soul. Plenty of acts never put out an album this good, much less a debut. *Luciana Lopez*



Jason Frank Rothenberg

**BLACK DICE**  
**BROKEN EAR RECORD**

Astralwerks/US/CD  
If going major usually signals curtains on an artist's creative era, hats off to Black Dice, who've gone pop, as it were, with aplomb. *Broken Ear Record* is, to these ears, their most realized and (gasp!) beautiful album. Album-opener “Snarly You” and its lazy drum machine concoction notwithstanding, there is hypnotic ecstasy to be found here in the fuzz-and-lock groove of “Smiling Off” and especially the gorgeous loping guitar rays of “Heavy Manners.” It's in the contrast of light and dark, of hypnosis and chaos, where one finds Black Dice's meta-gold. It's the oblivion and lift off that makes this a near-perfect record, broken ear or not. *Alexis Georgopoulos*

**SOLU MUSIC**  
**AFFIRMATION**

Solu Music/US/CD  
Giving deep house a healthy dose of fresh, soul-driven innovation, NYC's Dano Nathanson and Howie Caspe slide their debut album over to us like a beautifully garnished cocktail. Kai Martin's silken vocals caress the album's perfectly balanced instrumental flow, weaving effortlessly from the funk-fueled bumpers of “Can't Help Myself” and “Just Don't Know” to the beautiful, melancholy depths of “It Ain't Love” and “Blvd.” The superb keys, thoughtful lyrics and percussive zest found on *Affirmation* get upgraded even further with Dano's wide-ranging guitar presence, adding tremendously to the album's live energy. Seductive and smooth, *Affirmation* goes right to your head. *Doug Morton*

**PETER TOSH**  
**TALKING REVOLUTION**

Pressure Sounds/UK/CD  
Does the world really need another live Peter Tosh album? Yes, rasta. *Talking Revolution* distills the original Wailer's fiery essence into one crucial package and two discs (one electric, one acoustic), spotlighting not only Tosh's talent but also his penchant for outspoken controversy. The speech he gives in the middle of a rousing 12-minute romp “Burial” is as jaw-dropping a listen today as it was in 1978, and from the opening “Igziabier” to the closing medley of “Legalise It/Get Up Stand Up” (both of which appear unplugged and separately on disc two), there's literally never a dull moment. The band's on fire and so is Tosh, who uses the occasion (the One Love World Peace concert) as his own personal pulpit to demand equal rights and justice for all. *Eric K. Arnold*

**ERIK TRUFFAZ**  
**SALOUA**

Blue Note/US/CD  
You can't help but make the *Bitches Brew* comparison—the ethereal-rock temperament of “Salou” and “Ghost Drummer” invoke Miles in a not-so-silent way. Yet French trumpeter Erik Truffaz gets very quiet, quizzically so. *Saloua* is filled with interlocking influences, from dub rock tributes to serene soliloquies to Tunisian devotional chants by the mighty Mounir Troudi, whose Arabic plays gracefully off Swiss rapper Nya's insightful punctuation. After a few spins you realize you don't know where *Saloua* begins or ends. The goal is the journey, and for globetrotting Truffaz it is further testament to a catalog destined to be as classic as his sonic ancestry. *Derek Beres*

**TURBULENCE**  
**I BELIEVE**

M/NETH/CD  
This notorious natty MC/singer with a lyrical lisp not only delivers fire but also cools the tension as well, with a dose of cultural love songs added to this 12-tracker. Production-wise, only two joints use revived vintage Studio One rocksteady riddims—Skylarking on the song “Mama Don't Cry” and Queen of the Minstrel on the tune “Sweet And Pretty”; the rest of the production (by former Xterminator crewmen and Roots Radics bandmates Steven Stanley and Paul Danny) is luxurious. What Turbulence lacks is any difference from his other rasta brethren's subject matter, but he still penetrates his points with relentless repetition. Turbulence is a rising talent. Believe that. *Cokni O'Dire*

**SUSUMU YOKOTA**  
**SYMBOL**

Lo/UK/CD  
It's admirable for Susumu Yokota to want to incorporate classical works into modern electronic music contexts. *Symbol* represents the veteran techno/ambient producer's gung-ho attempt to lend some rhythmic heft to time-tested gorgeous melodies by Tchaikovsky, Mahler, Ravel, Cage, Debussy, Beethoven and many more deceased biggies. While some pieces seem ill-fitting and saccharine, the bulk of *Symbol* achieves a sublime fusion of incongruous elements, especially when fluid, Steve Reichian marimbas and samples of Meredith Monk's haunting chants intertwine with grandiose violins or urgent pianos. *Symbol* reveals Yokota's stunning arranging skills—and slyly educates neophytes about classical music's splendors. *Dave Segal*

**KEVIN YOST**  
**FUTURE FLASHBACK**

i! Records/US/CD  
Veteran house producer Kevin Yost has all but abandoned his prior dance music history. *Future Flashback* finds Yost freely exploring his lifelong obsession with jazz melodies: the result sounds like an airier, electronic version of Kyoto Jazz Massive, bubbling with tinkling piano notes and light jazz riffs with house beats floating only like friendly specters amidst Yost's dreamy atmospheres. With its unmistakable lounge vibes, *Future Flashback* sounds like something that belongs on Germany's Compost imprint (particularly “Free,” “Take Me Back” and “Welcome Home”) requiring both a relaxed tude and chilled cocktail in hand for proper appreciation. *Janet Tzou*



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**BRAZILIAN BEATS 6**  
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**Look out for the Brazilian Beats DVD, coming soon!**

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## COMP REVIEWS

**TOBI NEUMANN: PASS YOUR BEDTIME**  
Electric Avenue/GER/CD

**HOLGI STAR: DEPARTMENT NEUF**  
Kiddaz.fm/GER/CD

**MONDAY MORNING SESSION: LOCODICE & CLIVE HENRY**  
Four:Twenty/UK/CD

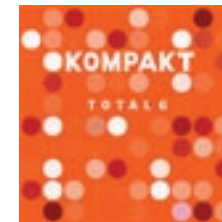
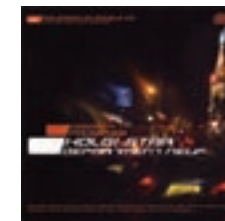
**TOTAL 6**  
Kompakt/GER/CD

**FATCAT RECORDS 2005**

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OUT OCT 18th

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TALES FROM THE SITTING ROOM  
CD/x2LP  
OUT SEPT 6th

**AOKI takamasa +Tujiko Noriko '28'**  
CD OUT NOV 14th  
( www.fat-cat.co.uk )



**FOUR COMPS THAT ANSWER THE QUESTION, "CAN TECHNO STILL SURPRISE US?"**

Song or track? Techno or house? Micro or maxi? Underground warehouse or thousands-strong festival? The binary oppositions of tech-house are crumbling rapidly, leaving artists free to start tunes with the tiniest of sounds and expand into laser-firing, hand-waving, bassbin-blowing extravaganzas as they please. Meanwhile, DJs are trading in confined record bags for infinite hard drives and pulling out whatever bangs for double-disc maximized blissfests that defy the old easy categorizations.

We start in Ibiza at the tail-end of an all-night session, as Locodice and Clive Henry guide us through 'til dawn on a *Monday Morning Session*. Locodice keeps the beats rolling while feeding us melodies galore, including his own ambient gem "Menina Brasileira." The back half of his hour spins up again into a clattering, percussive, acidy sequence highlighted by Kat Williams's blazing "That Track by Kat," twisting the beats up and around to introduce Clive Henry. The former prog houser has numerous surprises ready—over a bedrock of driving, gritty electro, he throws in Kalabrese's Supremes-quoting "Set Me Free," the familiar pop melody working like cold water on a hot dancefloor. But as the sun rises on the end of his Ibiza set, John Tejada's intense "Paranoia" announces, "Don't sleep yet."

And we won't, not with Holgi Star manning the decks for *Department Neuf*, as he rolls out an intense pair of discs that start in dark microhouse territory and build momentum until we hit Star's own "Swing." Suddenly we are in brighter jacking territory—the glamorous bounce of classic house. But remember, Chicago and Detroit birthed techno, too, and by his second disc Star has piloted us to its darkest center.

Loops and acid squelches buzz around and suddenly we've broken into Asem Shama's headbanging-ready "The Schacht" and Sontec's "Black Sun," which leaves us dizzied by techno's possibilities.

Possibility is the province of house, too, as Tobi Neumann knows. *Pass Your Bedtime* almost seems like a straight house set after the previous mixes, but listen closely and the variety of the genre is revealed: Neumann deftly integrates *schaffel* swing, micro-house *en espanol* courtesy of Luciano and even some progressive and trance influences into the standard bump-tick metronome. There's plenty of Latin flair in the latter half of his mix, too, a welcome shimmy to close the marathon session.

On the way home, the leaders of techno-house's roving eclecticism come together for Kompakt's *Total 6* and summarize what we've learned. Rave stabs, micro-beats, electro shuffle, reconfigured Autotune pop and adrenaline-rush techno builds dot the collection, defying us to call the label a microhouse-only club. DJ Koze leads off with "Hicc Up," a skittery dose of Cologne tech-pop. Rex the Dog's "I Look Into Mid-Air" is a sweeping post-rave anthem grown from the tiniest austere seed. Kaito's "Hundred Million Lightyears" is a digitized wordless tweepeep ditty, stripped down to brilliant synths that sparkle with the joy of forgetting the distinctions between overground and underground, purpose and effect, techno and house, and simply dancing. *Rob Geary*



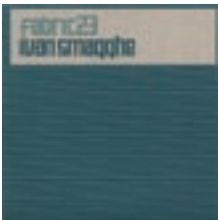


HVW8

**HVW8 PRESENTS: MUSIC IS MY ART**

Ubiquity/US/CD

Known more for brushwork than for beat matching, HVW8 Art Installation is a trio of artists that have created a diverse oeuvre of work for museums, clients like Puma and live music events. On their new compilation, *Music is My Art*, the group proves it's also had its collective ear to the ground, gathering a cross-section of cutting-edge hip-hop, soul and broken beat tracks. Ubiquity artists are well represented, but that doesn't diminish the disc's quality or range. The strutting, soulful track "The Hop" and "Long Ago," a Roots-flavored rap, cap off a compilation as rewarding as a gallery opening: no masterpieces, but plenty to be excited about. *Patrick Sisson*



**FABRICLIVE 23: DEATH IN VEGAS**

**FABRIC 23: IVAN SMAGGHE**

Fabric/UK/CD

Increasingly the label from London's Fabric megaclub has transitioned from representing the scope of the club's labyrinthine physical space to reflecting its founders' listening preferences. Commercial, spacious mixes are matched or bettered by post-industrial/electro minimalism, culminating in Death In Vegas' *Fabric Live 23* and Ivan Smaghe's *Fabric 23*. Both share similarities—equally bleak and primarily riff-free. But whereas DIV's Richard Fearless's more Kraftwerk-than-Krautrock Detroit homage could accompany shuttle docking, popping and locking sequences, the mix from Smaghe (half of Parisians Black Strobe) is more heaving and humanistic at first—even while purveying Teutonic techno, he dips into arpeggiated, stratified squelches. Tech-house and acidic robo-funk dry hump across both, though the ultimate prize for gritty bleeping falls to Smaghe's more wobbly selection. *Tony Ware*

**GREG WILSON: CREDIT TO THE EDIT**

Tirk/UK/CD

Mr. Wilson is credited as one of the first DJs to import electro into the UK—namely through Madchester's feted Hacienda club where the seeds of rave culture grew in the sidewalk cracks. However, his fingerprints were best left every Wednesday at Legend where he helped solidify British black beat culture. *Credit to the Edit* is a fine snapshot of Wilson's sets from early to mid-'80s, where disco went underground and became mechanized. Wilson traces the electro element of robo-funk with the likes of Kool & the Gang, Uncle Louie and Chic. Nowhere does the electro-disco connection positively hypnotize like Raw DMX's "Do It To The Funk." Oh, and Chaka Khan's "I Feel for You" kills 80% of today's glitch-hop scallywags dead. *Cameron Macdonald*

**GRIMEY**

Greensleeves/UK/CD

**BIONIC RAS**

South Rakkas Entertainment/US/CD

Precisely separated synthesizer blips, wobbly keyboard stabs and a fingersnaps-only beat ironically define producers The Ballaz's Grimey rhythm, with nary a bit of audible dirt. It works best with a bit of a sung chorus to sweeten it, as Chico & Kiprich figure out on "Bag A Man." The South Rakkas Crew's Bionic Ras is even more defiantly synthetic, with staccato rave synthesizers ripping away and a slithery bassline that practically screams Fruity Loops. In addition to the usual suspects (Sizzla, Ward 21, et al), the bionic beat attracts UK grime-ists Dynamite MC and JD of So Solid for a hot UK/Jamaica party. *Rob Geary*

**KITSUNÉ MAISON COMPILATION**

Kitsuné/FRA/CD

Always ambitiously themed, here's another comp from Parisian fashion/art/music clusterfuck Kitsuné. This time around, the theme is "home" and, evidently, their friends—the accompanying fold out booklet displays 461 of the label's friends rendered in perfectly imperfect hand drawn portraits. Mind, it's not quite translated into the music, an orgy of '80s-loving dancefloor destroyers with inspired efforts from usual suspects Tom Vek, Hot Chip, Tomboy, Digitalism and VHS Or Beta. A good listen, yet one in which the House of Fashion trumps all. *Brian Paul*

**MAD PROFESSOR: METHOD TO THE MADNESS**

Sanctuary-Ariwa/UK/2CD

Neil Fraser, the legendary British dubmaster known as The Mad Professor, started with a four-track setup in his living room circa 1979. With decades of experience under his belt, it's not surprising that the double-disc set *Method To The Madness* is a comprehensive listen. Split into one disc of his Ariwa label's classics and a second disc of Mad Prof pop remixes, you get a clear impact of how his madness spread from reggae into other genres. Although it boasts names such as Perry Farrell, Massive Attack and Jamiroquai, it's the lesser-known artists that are this compilation's true gems. Songs like Sandra Cross' wistful digital roots tune "Country Living" reflect the insightfulness that has made Fraser a dub icon. *David Ma*

**MIDNIGHT SOUL**

Kinky Sweet/US/2CD

If veteran San Francisco DJ Tom Thump's intention on *Midnight Soul* was to bring some tasteful tracks to the Buddha Bar lounge crowd, he's succeeded in spades. While only a few cuts (Kaskade's "Let You Go" and the Peter Malick/Norah Jones joint) scream fashion stilettos and fruity martinis, the rest of two discs reads like a who's who from Groove or Goya Distribution's new releases list. Exclusives like Alison Crockett's "UR" remixed by Yam Who? sit snugly next to bangers by Platinum Pied Pipers, Mark de Clive-Lowe and Lizz Fields. This is exactly what I want to be hearing 'round midnight. *Tomas Palermo*

**NORTEC COLLECTIVE: TIJUANA SESSIONS VOL. 3**

Nacional Records/US/CD

Imagine you're driving through a windswept California desert, listening to the radio in your beat-up pickup truck; suddenly, all the stations blur together into one massive mess of melodies and samples. That's the sound of the Nortec Collective, a crew of musicians that skillfully blends modern electronic music with traditional Mexican music. On their second full-length (they skipped volume two), they avoid performing a shotgun wedding between genres. Thumping tubas, echoing brass and buoyant Latin percussion feel like organic parts of their laid-back grooves, not grafted-on afterthoughts. If you like Latin beats, you'll find this album spot on (think *El Mariachi* with a sampler). *Patrick Sisson*

**OVERDRIVE: A DJ MIX BY APHRODITE**

Feed/UK/CD

When former *XLR8R* 12" editor and matey Ron Nachmann would slap on the latest single by UK d&b don Aphrodite a collective groan would rise up from the office (especially from my corner). I'd grumble, "Not that cheesy guy who's best friends with DJ Rap and plays raves called 'Excalibur IV: The Reckoning'." Ron would reply with a pithy, "Don't hate, appreciate!" So here I am, regaling Aphrodite for assembling and mixing high-energy jungle tunes, including his collabo's with deceased MC Stevie Hyper-D and diva Beverly Knight. In fact, Aphrodite's tunes outshine the comp's generic snare-rolling tearouts from Benny Page, Distorted Minds or The Force. *Overdrive* delivers its implied impact. *Tomas Palermo*

**PULVER RECORDS LABEL COMPILATION 02**

Pulver/GER/CD

Partially obscured by the ascendancy of minimal techno and micro-house in Germany's dance underground, Stuttgart's Pulver Records has boldly forged onward over the last four years with a trademark sound fusing the Latin-informed jazz signature of Compost with the vigorous digital breaks of Kompakt. Mainstays like Inverse Cinematics and Dutch Rhythm Combo offer up cuts that further blur the divide between fractured dub, out-there jazz and electrified breaks. Big, bright and shimmering in an organic sheen, Pulver once again shows the world another side of German groove. *Steve Marchese*

**REGGAE FOR HUMANITY: VOLUME 01**

Manila Jeepney/US/CD

The folks at Manila Jeepney made an interesting move with this hour-long compilation—they had each featured artist sing over the same two rhythms (Dark Skin Girls and Guide Us). This method doesn't leave much room for variation or individual highlights, but everyone from Luciano to Donna V makes good use of these two classic reggae instrumentals with their uplifting good vibes. If anything, *Reggae For Humanity* lives up to its title and represents consistency to the fullest. *Max Herman*

**REGGAE GOLD 2005**

VP/US/CD

A decade ago, the first reggae comp I bought for my wife was VP's *Reggae Gold 94*. Everything on it was all kill and no fill. Back then, even the weaker tunes on the comp were passable because dancehall itself was richer. Fast-forward to 2005 and dancehall is all about the *weddy weddy*, reggaeton, Fat Man Scoop and Lil Jon; the vibe is different, and so is *Reggae Gold*. For every hot foundation tune (Beres Hammond's "Love Mood" or Kiprich's murderous "Telephone Ting") you have nuff gloss and floss from Nina Sky, Beenie Man and Sean Paul. Although top-tier DJ Assassin makes good with two hot shots ("As A Man" and "Step Pon Dem"), roots stars like I Wayne, Gentleman and Jah Cure deserve a couple more joints on there. And I don't even wanna talk about the bonus disc of all the songs made into a mixtape. Is this 2005 or '95? *Cokni O'Dire*

**ROD LEE: THE OFFICIAL VOLUME 5**

Club Kingz-Morphius Urban/US/CD

One drawback to internet world-bridging is the imminent end of the already dying phenomenon of regional music genres. While a visit to Maryland is no longer necessary to experience Baltimore club, Rod Lee still runs the genre; *Vol. 5* finds Lee vigorously blending his tracks with those of fellow B-more natives like DJ Technics and his 14-year-old cousin DJ Lil' Jay. Its future may be in Rotterdam or Osaka, but, if tracks like Technics' "Get Up on It" and Lee's bitingly truthful "Dance My Pain Away" are any indication, Baltimore club still has a lot of life in it. *Jesse Serwer*

**SONAR KOLLEKTIV 4: ALL AS ONE AGAIN**

Sonar Kollektiv/GER/CD

When Jazzanova formed Sonar Kollektiv in 1998, downtempo was drifting toward bachelor pad purgatory, but this compilation of exclusive tracks, teasers from

forthcoming records (notably Fat Freddy's Drop's reggae-infused "Roody") and remixes shows the label's many evolutions since. The throaty vocals on Dimlite's "Back to the Universe" downshift to a halt before blasting through the cosmos on prog-rock wings, a journey George Levin takes "Inside" with a sultry female response. From AME's minimal house treatment of Wahoo's "Holding You" to the jazzed-up staccato kick of Faze Liquide's "Kirkness" and Outlines' "Just A Little Lovin'," the Kollektiv artists transform retro styles into sexy future soul. *Rachel Shimp*

**SPANK ROCK**

**VOILA**

Money Studies/US/CD

If you've seen Spank Rock's live show—complete with an ass-twisting, guidette-looking dancer and Amanda, a dirty mouthed femcee who may qualify as best white girl rapper ever—you've probably got hopes for the Philly-based Baltimore transplant's upcoming Ninja Tune LP. Unfortunately, *Voila* (from Turntable Lab's Money Studies mix label) doesn't provide much insight into what that LP will be like. Amanda doesn't appear, and Spank himself disappears after a handful of joints mixed into the CD's first track. What follows is rather aimless mix of Hollertronix-style mashups ("Sympathy for the Devil" bumps up against Fabolous) by DJs Christopher Rockwell and XXXChange, that—rare Baltimore club tracks aside—is pretty boring. *Jesse Serwer*

**TEXAS FUNK**

Jazzman-Now Again/US/CD

If the affair between Stones Throw's reissue imprint Now Again and British funk obsessives Jazzman proved hot and heavy on last year's *Midwest Funk*, consider *Texas Funk* the consummation of a new musical marriage. Twenty-one tracks of obscure Lone Star groove—from the famous (Lou Pride, Mickey & The Soul Generation) to the thoroughly unknown (Soul Ones, Eddie Finley and The Cincinnati Show Band)—melt Latin boogaloo and Chicano horns into their thick, messy funk. A truly class act, from the universally fine selections to the thoroughly informative and beautifully presented 24-page booklet. Highly recommended. *Justin Hopper*

**WEED A-BUN VOL.1**

Jet Star/UK/CD

The illustrious world of dancehall and reggae is as unifying as it is revolutionary. Given the political tensions of the past century, it's about time a collection of odes to the therapeutic gift of ganja has been bestowed upon us. Packed with contemporary and renowned DJs and singers, these tracks summon a variety of styles in homage to queen cheeba. Luciano's infamous version of Peter Tosh's "Legalize It" contrasts well with the rugged thumping from Beenie Man and LMS. The inspirational, herbal torch has been passed through a multitude of musical genres. *Weed A-Bun* definitively celebrates what keeps heads nodding. *Fred Miketa*



DJ YOUNGSTA

**DUBSTEP ALLSTARS VOL. 2**

Tempa/UK/CD

The Tempa label gives *XLR8R* the credit for spreading the "dubstep" tag when it appeared on a 2002 cover with a picture of Horsepower. While we're flattered, it was really the first installment of this series that introduced the term, along with names like DJ Hatcha, Skream, Loefah and D1—the names of the scene, all under one shanty. This emerging sound combines traditional dub elements with junglist intensity, except half-stepped and under heavy, heavy sedation. Every track on this collection, mixed by DJ Youngsta, is exclusive and being issued for the first time, which means that D1's "Crack Bong" has yet to become a staple (which it will). Then there's Digital Mystik's "Neverland," which closes out the disc: an anthem in disguise, it amps up with a dancehall tempo and a dutchy production style that's slow cooked and potent. *Daniel Siwek*





## TECHNO GUEST REVIEWS: MISKATE

Philadelphia's Kate Iwanowicz (a.k.a. Miskate) isn't a household name to minimal techno fans yet, but if her recent deluge of vinyl is any indication, ribcages far and near will soon be quaking to her skittering rhythms. Originally a Pittsburgh DJ, she held down residencies at laga and Zythos, and was co-founder of Savitri Sundays. Iwanowicz received a degree in anthropology (and a minor in music) and participated in a gamelan ensemble. A multi-instrumentalist from her youth onwards—first playing violin, then piano and guitar and now sample-based electronics—Iwanowicz's regular DJ bookings encouraged her move to Philadelphia in summer 2001. Girl got right down to brass tacks, organizing both the Pitchspork monthly (with guest DJs like Magda, Geoff White and Jeff Milligan) and the foundsound record label. Her 2004 single "Rip It Cookie Muenster" (foundsound) was remixed by Matthew Dear and her other squiggly jams are out on Microcosm and Alphahouse. Here's what's skating through her sets these days. *Che Devine* [www.foundsoundrecords.com](http://www.foundsoundrecords.com)

### SOMEONE ELSE/EZEKIEL HONIG **MACROFUN VOL.3** Microcosm/US/10

Someone Else's comfy bassline and solid snares on "Goink" keep the body grounded as the mind swirls within a static cloud that envelops kaleidoscopic laughter and vocoded phraselets. Scratchy percussion tumbles into time while a moody bassline strolls, and handclaps keep you oriented within Ezekiel Honig's wistful "Transportation Application." *Miskate*

### FRIVOLOUS **KEVORK MOTION EP** Background/GER/12

Frivolous's "Poularde Artificielle" is a sweet and pleasantly bumpy ride with soothing pans and insectile frequencies that cut through the thick honey deepness. "Lazy Dazy"'s long-patterned bass makes for a song-like jam with crickets in the distance, story-telling vocals and the occasional violin interjection. *Miskate*

### TROY PIERCE **RUN** Minus/CAN/12

Troy Pierce pushes the minimal techno pattern in "King Contrary Man" with tweezy blips and sharp metallic wisps that cut through a bouncing bass. In "Scene 15," the sky may as well be falling with atmospheric washes and twisted bells while a stompy bass keeps the time. *Miskate*

### JACKSON AND HIS COMPUTER BAND **ROCK ON**

Warp/US/12

Think of French house while listening to Jackson And His Computer Band and you begin to gain an entirely new sense of the status of dance music in the Gallic state. This single, like its mind-numbing cover art, is dark, dense and at times abstract. It's mid-tempo house for the darkest crevasses of the mind. Jackson's clearly trying to tell us something, but what is it? *Monty Luke*

### MONNE AUTOMNE **TEGO REMIXES**

LoFi Stereo/GER/12

With Luciano and Pier Bucci appearing for the last time as Monne Automne, this remix EP blissfully completes their discography. A filtered frenzy of liquid clicks and taunting chords awaits the original hook on this classic Mediterranean delight. Flip for an epic, melody-infused cut from Neville Attree. Think Ibiza at 5:30 a.m. *Praxis*

### LUSINE **INSIDE/OUT**

Peter Grummich

THE ROLL

Spectral/US/12

Seattle's Lusine and German Grummich don't share much in common on these singles, sitting on opposite ends of the leftfield techno spectrum. Heard in conjunction, however, they're equally compelling. While Lusine focuses on precision cuts, noises and details over four gorgeous, vocal-warping slices of danceable ambient-glitch, Grummich throws his drum machine against the wall and rages like a tweaking minimal-tech punk rocker. The beauty of Lusine's chart-bound "These Things" is only matched by Grummich's stomach-punching "This One Jacks." *Derek Grey*

### HERBERT BOSE **TIMES UP**

Jaktronic/GER/12

Oddly hitting shelves as this artist's first release, the 12" combines the arrangement skills of a veteran sequencer and the audio selection of a trained producer. Fusing a bit of Detroit techno, UK electro and Chicago house alike, the sound ranges from atmospheric synth washes to quasi-acid blips and back to pumping 130bpm percussion. A skilled production no doubt, and true analog vintage synths to boot! *Praxis*

### TOCOTRONIC

#### PURE VERNUNFT DARF NIEMALS SIEGEN

Kompakt Pop/GER/12

If you like Misson Of Burma or Yo La Tengo and speak German, Tocotronic offers a jangly, propulsive dose of indie songcraft. While the CMJ set digests it lovingly, the dance DJs out there can fixate on the Superpitcher and Wassermann mixes, especially the nine-minute Maxi version, which uses handclaps, treated guitar samples and melodic tech-house synth stabs as building material. The finished edifice is a sturdy club track that cloudbursts mid-track into warm, smothering feedback. *Tomas Palermo*

### GINO S & SNAKE PLISSKEN **MYTH MANIAC EP**

Notorious Elektro/FRA/12

Arriving as this label's first 12" release, the sound only leaves listeners aching for more. Cataloged amongst Gigolo, Turbo, Hot Banana and Kilo, this industrial-aimed electro-tech thriller is full of stinky mid-bass grooves and steadily driving dance-proven percussive bits. The distorted/compressed memo vocal line with Biggie Smalls flavor truly seals the deal. *Praxis*

### REPEAT REPEAT

#### BOUNCE YOUR BODY TO THE BOX

Soma/SCOT/12

While Soma's recent output has been too club-oriented for some listeners, this new EP should reinvigorate interest in the label's diverse A&R policies. Dave Congreve and Mark Rutherford's Repeat Repeat treads in minimal acid territory, the no-man's land between Orac's tweezy, panned and cut-up minimalism and Perlon's guttural bounce. "I Dream of Riots" slices '80s videogame noises with a laser scalpel, exposing a core of tic-tac drum skips and stereo digital sound design. "Intense" is the most apt description I have for this. *Tomas Palermo*

### DARREN GATE

#### SLACK SPACE

Skip/GER/12

Introducing some fresh US talent, Skip diversifies with a showcase of genre fusion for this chilled-out installation. The A-side delivers a simple tech-house feel, hosting a syncopated mono-synth lead with an added ornamental slide. Funky yet straight-ahead, the B-side contains a distinct melody atop static haze, set in a Chicago-styled industrial mix. *Praxis*

### SEX IN DALLAS **GRAND OPENING**

Jahcoozi

BLACK BARBIE

Kitty-Yo/GER/12

When I first put on Kidnap's mix of Sex In Dallas' "Threads" I thought, "Did George Clinton's Brides of Funkenstein go acid techno?" Instead, SID's EP unfolds as four blackhearted synthpunk tunes that might fall into Trevor Jackson's or Ricardo Villalobos' crates. The Stereotyp remix of Jahcoozi's "Black Barbie" takes a Coolie Dance-type riddim and attaches it to some ragga art scenester vocal ramblings (think M.I.A. or G.Rizo). I like the squelchy, techno bounce of "Jah C/DC" better—its slower tempo and dirty beats repel all notions of restraint. *Che Devine*



SEPTEMBER 2005 RELEASES

OCTOBER 2005 RELEASES



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LOOP D' LOOP



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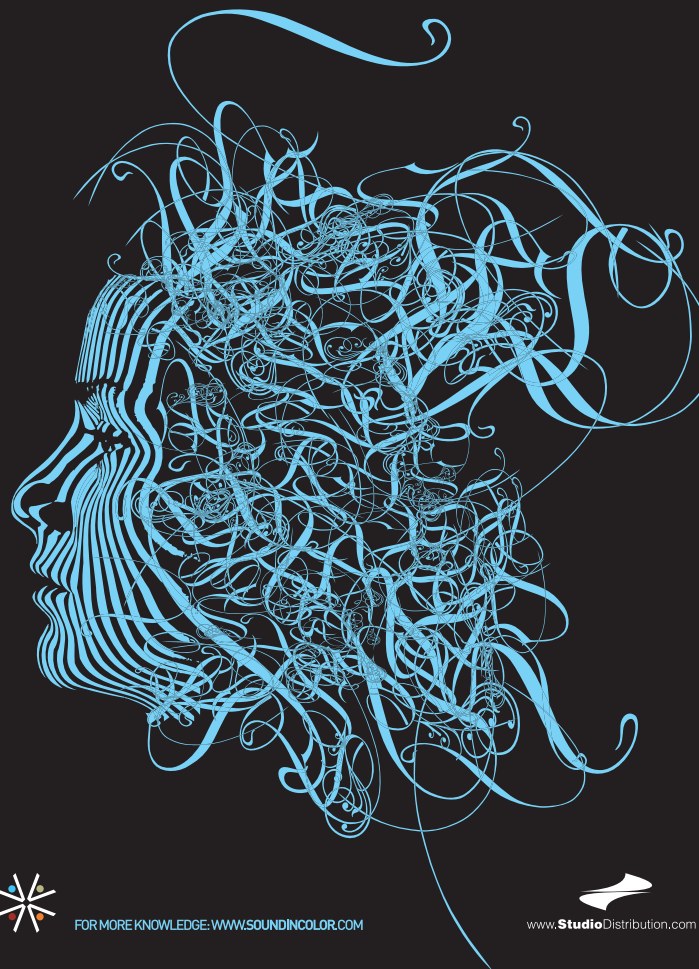
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## STEVE SPACEK

"SPACE SHIFT" AVAILABLE OCT.4TH  
STEVE SPACEK, the acclaimed voice behind the groundbreaking genre-pushing group Spacek, who were championed by everyone from Entertainment Weekly to Mos Def, is readying his debut solo album "Space Shift" on Sound In Color. It's his great American album, produced largely in Los Angeles. Steve created the bulk of the beats himself. Sci-fi and futuristic in vision, these beats still manage to take the previously London sound of Spacek into a whole new dimension. Of course, it doesn't hurt that Steve also brought in beat master J-Dilla (Common / Erykah Badu / Busta Rhymes / Tribe Called Quest) for the album's lead single "Dollar," a stunning master piece of modern soul. The legendary songwriter Leon Ware (Marvin Gaye) also makes a guest appearance in a brilliant duet. Future soul just got way sexier.



## SA-RA

"SECOND TIME AROUND" AVAILABLE OCT.4TH  
SA-RA and SOUND IN COLOR (SIC) have done it again... Following up on the massive success of GB's "Simply So" feat. Steve Spacek (SA-RA RMX), nominated for Gilles Peterson's World Wide (BBC Radio) Awards ("Song of the Year"), SIC is proud to present "Second Time Around."

In recent history, SA-RA has grown from underground phenomenon, to achieving mainstream cult status by signing to Kanye West's Sony label imprint, G.O.O.D. Music. This amazing SRCP / SIC release features collabo's with two of hip hop's most dynamic heroes, Pharoshe Monch (Fish Fille) and J Dilla (Thrilla).

Also, Included in this release is "Second Time Around," which features the first ever SA-RA a cappella, and "Smokeless Highs," a beat banger for the heads and a CD bonus cut, "We Gonna Do It Again." Another sure shot from forward thinking label SOUND IN COLOR, and ground breaking super group, SA-RA.







**HOUSE GUEST REVIEWS: WALLY CALLERIO**

Throughout this issue you've probably gotten the idea that Chicago has house music on lock. But Southern California DJs and producers like Doc Martin, Marques Wyatt and our reviewer Wally Callerio have put a distinct West Coast stamp on the genre. Callerio's Dufflebag Recordings (founded in 1997) made a home for international artists such as Natural Rhythm, JT Donaldson, Lance Desardi and Vibezelect. The label's sound has always been a consistent brew of robust four-to-the-floor drum programming, dreamy melodies and funky basslines that get the blood pumping quicker than a steamy episode of *The OC*. Callerio's no slouch behind the mixing desk either, releasing work on labels like Alluv, Aroma, Classic, Magnetic and Panhandle. His latest remix of Josh One's "Afterhours" on 5.1 Surround (MyUtopia) is out now. Visit Callerio's newly launched digital music store Digibag, and check out the latest music from this visionary producer and businessman. Now lets take a peak in his bag. *Hector Cedillo* [www.digibag.com](http://www.digibag.com)

**NATURAL RHYTHM POLITICS AND GREED** Vista/US/12

The track starts off with a deep, chunky bassline that draws the dancers in and then calms their souls with some soothing keys. Just when you think the song can't get any better, then enters the meanest muted trumpet I've heard in any house track! *Wally Callerio*

**VIBEZELECT SIMPLE LIFE** White/US/CD-R

Farina doesn't play a set anywhere in the world that doesn't include a Vibezelect track. "Simple Life" will surely satisfy the crowds that like it deep, with a chugging bassline that rumbles your stomach and subtle keys to get you in a hypnotic boogie. *Wally Callerio*

**DJ ROD (JAMANTA CREW) POQUITO** Public Access/US/CD

Brazil is not only a beautiful country, but also a great place to find some of the finest Chicago-style house in the world. Yes, that's right, Chicago house! "Poquito" is a straight up chugger, with a touch of tracked out jazz guitar samples and horns. This is one of the many tracks currently in rotation in my bag. *Wally Callerio*

**MINUS 8 SOLARIS (PASCAL HAHN & MINUS 8 REMIX)**

Compost Black/GER/12  
Compost Black's latest double A-side is their fourth installment into edgier, techier nu-house. While "Solaris" is on a darker (yet almost too clean to be dirty) tip—appealing to those feeling the Tiefschwarz vibe—Zwicker's "Made Up" is a much more lush deep house cut with subtle effects and sweet, robotic vocals perfect for those sweaty basement nights. *TK*

questions. The former, featuring the vocals of *Repellent Magazine's* Ihu Anyanwu (a.k.a G.Rizo), is a hedonistic disco-tech arpeggio party peak while the latter subdues things with the kind of thing Tiefschwarz or Soulwax might play at a dinner party for their parents. *Alexis Georgopoulos*

**DJ OJI ESTEBAN JEROME SYDENHAM AND MIKAEL NORDGREN**

**STOCKHOLM-GO BANG** Ibadan/US/12  
Intertwining anodyne melodies with rapturous drum rhythms, "Esteban" will leave the dancers still moving to its reverberations. DJ Oji and percussionist David Greenwood showcase their perspicacity for the diverse dancefloor experience. With the mix of "Esteban" fading out, "Stockholm-Go Bang" fades into the light with its pulsating and delicious string section. Fans of "The Joburg Theme" by DJ Gregory or the Spiritual South remix of "Gabryelle" will welcome these additions to the house. *Scott Edmonds*

**IN FLAGRANT! BANG BANG! MELODY MAKER**

Codek/US/12  
Sure to make all the Tigersushi/Williamsburg kids as jolly as a coked up St. Nick, Codek gurus Alex Gloor and Sasha Crnobnja's two new ones, "Bang Bang!" and "Melody Maker," answer each other's

**RON TRENT PRESENTS ITAL FOODS DUB LIFE**

Atal Music/FRA/12  
As much a visual representation of culture as hand-woven Kente cloth, "Dub Life" communicates a story that is both hyper-textual and abstruse. Inspired percussion and dub-influenced effects make this tune an intricate and percussive delicacy. *Scott Edmonds*



**2-STEP GUEST REVIEWS: LOEFAN**

With an alias like Loefan, you might think that Peter Livingstone is one lazy bloke. Not so. In fact, he replied in a tidy 48 hours to this guest reviews request, and didn't slack on getting his work done. Livingston is no slouch on the releases either, with tons of tracks out for labels like Rephlex and Big Apple. He's a regular at club FWD and spins on grime pirate Rinse FM. So, if he's not lazy, why the name? "The origin of my name lies with my MC Sgt. Pokes," Livingston relates via email. "I used to mix drum & bass as Loe2. Pokes love wordplay and he ended up adapting Loe2 into Loefan." Whew! The mystery is solved. For the uninitiated, we asked Livingstone to describe his music as if explaining it to his mom. "To be honest...my mum knows the score. But if I was explaining it to *your* mum I'd tell her, 'My music is minimal and bass heavy.'" Touché. This trainer-loving, Xbox-destroying, Tottenham Hotspur supporter has loads more in store, including big tunes on the new *Dubstep Allstars 2* and his own label, Ital. Here's his top ranking tunes of late. *Tomas Palermo* [www.dmzuk.com](http://www.dmzuk.com), [www.tempa.com](http://www.tempa.com)

**DIGITAL MYSTIKZ HAUNTED** dub/UK/12

This track is by Coki (one-half of Digital Mystikz), which—to those in the know—means that you best steady yourself for the sonic onslaught that will inevitably ensue. It opens with an ugly percussive-sounding synth which filters down into nothingness before a wall of sound explodes. In my experience, it's never got past eight bars before someone presses the button to reload. *Loefan*

**DIGITAL MYSTIKZ NEVERLAND** DMZ/UK/12

"Neverland" has been around on dub for over a year now and, if you're lucky enough to have a copy, is a standard in any dubstep set. It's got 808 beats, layered strings, percussion, and a bassoon-like sound provides the hook. It captures the same ambient dreaminess as LTJ Bukem's classic "Music." *Loefan*

**SKREAM** I Tempa/UK/12

"I" is for incredible. Incredible bass, incredible beats, incredible melodies, incredible energy. A pad that lies somewhere between *Blade Runner* and *Friday The Thirteenth* builds a perpetual tension, coupled with a clock-work yet sparse rhythm that keeps the track's momentum upbeat. *Loefan*

**RIO BAILE FUNK 2: MORE FAVELA BOOTY BEATS**

Essay/GER/12  
Bass and electro breaks travel to Rio, Brazil again for a four-track injection of *baile funk*. Os Carrascos's "Pique Tá" has a rhythm somewhere between Soulsonic Force and L'trimm. Jack E Chocolate blends cumbia and Forro-style funky Latin horns with bassy beats. Vanessinha and Malha Funk round out the EP with a Salt-N-Pepa/new jack swing vibe and infectious Portuguese chant-raps. Jam on this. *Derek Grey*

**KODE9 AND THE SPACEAPE KINGSTOWN**

Hyperdub/UK/10  
Flyers for the Digital Mystikz's DMZ dubstep night read "Come meditate on bass weight." "Kingstown" closes a single mournful riff around The Spaceape's growling indictment of societal violence and alienation until listening becomes a spiritual, introspective experience. Triangle and tablas beat out a twitching post-R&B rhythm and yet there's no sex in this: rather, purpose and a cold anger. *Cooper*

**SHACKLETON I AM ANIMAL**

Skulldisco/UK/12  
"Mystical Warrior" is dubstep on Skylab—skittering synth arpeggios with a huge Reese bass underneath and hisses like escaping air. "I Am Animal" puts the roots back into the bassline and lays out a spare percussion groove only to steadily push up the intensity with cymbal rolls; it's great at either midnight or 3 a.m. *Cooper*  
**SENSI ALLSTARS VERSUS CONTROL Z**

**BIG RIDDIM**

Wireframe/UK/12  
Well, this is definitely a *British* breakbeat single. How do I know? Doctor Who Moog leads? Check. Soundclash vocal samples? Check. Bits of acid and "Mentasm" synth stabs? Check. "Big Riddim" is a tad generic, but engineered so deftly that it remains an effective club tune. "Decade of Jungle" is more of the same with better bass programming. *Derek Grey*

**JASON MUNDO KEEP ON MOVING**

Kreative Mindz/UK/12  
Dallas native Mundo turns out a classic bumpy UK garage tune with a squeelchy Todd Edwards feel. Strings get processed and filtered within an inch of their life and the snares have a rough metallic snap to them, so the whole piece leaks funk like oil out of a bad engine, wetting up the dancefloor. *Cooper*

**DIVERTED THOLID**

TCR/UK/12  
With a nasty groove that walks a tightrope between nu-skoool breakbeat and electro-techno, Diverted (Steve Baxter and Lee Richardson) filters, twists and freaks the synth bass into all kinds of funky shapes. A remix by Breakneck's Vlad Sokolov has a sensual, 2-steppy swing. Hot! *J. Jones*

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## DRUM & BASS GUEST REVIEWS: D-KAY

Vienna, Austria's David Kulenkampff probably has more tracks to his credit than Paris Hilton has pairs of shoes. We're talking truckloads of amazingly constructed drum & bass gems as D-Kay, and under aliases such as Aikon and Mindmachine, as well as co-productions with DJ Lee, Epsilon and Rawfull (as Illskillz) for labels such as C.I.A., Critical and Renegade. Kulenkampff has his share of breakthrough songs like "Tunning" (Metalheadz) and the classic "Be There 4 U" (Freak) with Rawfull. Kulenkampff also runs the Brigand label, which recently released "Babylon," a track that solidified his reputation for making tracks that both the drumfunk and hardstep crews have to rinse. Travel to central Europe and you'll hear him play at Club Flex in Vienna regularly while his debut album is due to drop before the end of 2005. *Devon Pierce* [www.illskillz.at](http://www.illskillz.at)

### STATE OF MIND SUN KING CIA/UK/12

On this 12" from New Zealand, an intense, chant-driven intro leads into a heavy drop, introduced by a pounding drum roll and an Indian vocal leads on through the whole track, giving it an uplifting and hypnotic feeling. *D-Kay*

### D-BRIDGE WITHOUT ANSWERS Soul:r/UK/12

Darren from Bad Company comes with two deep steppers on Soul:r. Intricate sample tweaking, top grooves and the already trademark D-Bridge sub make this 12" a must have for the advanced listener. *D-Kay*

### HAZARD USE YOUR BRAIN Ganja/UK/12

I like music that makes me smile and this track absolutely does. Hazard turns on the fun and pulls it off nicely without being cheesy. "Use Your Brain" is wicked in the mix and gets drawn in every set. Keep an eye out for this guy in the future. *D-Kay*

### FUNKY TECHNICIANS

#### LEGENDS OF LOVE

Liqweed/UK/12

Total Science returns under their jazzy, uplifting Funky Technicians alias for the first release on DJ Hype and Pascal's new imprint, Liqweed. Quiff and Spinback find a balance between tough drums and engaging, melodic compositions. Both "Legends of Love" and "One World" mesh soul-drenched vocal samples (Donnie Hathaway!) with rolling rhythms. As usual, I'm mesmerized. *Derek Gray*

### DJ PHANTASY, SHODAN & UK APACHE

#### I SAY, YOU SAY

Easy/UK/12

OK ravers, get out your lighters, whistles and horns—*mek me see some signal!* A strictly red light ragga MC track from Phantasy and Shodan, with UK Apache chatting pure party lyrics: "If them coming in tough/we coming in tougher/should a never test/the Original Nuttah. It's madness laid over moody David Axelrod samples and a buzzing hornet bassline. To be honest, d&b has been in a rut and it needed an anthemic jump-up track like this to shake things up. *DJ Chopper*

### TRUST/CLASS OF '98

#### BIG TROUBLE IN LITTLE CHINA

OG/US/12

#### TRUST

#### ONLY YOU FEAT. AUDIO ANGEL

Gasm/US/12

Trust is fast becoming America's DJ Hype—a scratching, rap-focused producer and DJ whose sampled tracks translate hip-hop's attitude and head-nod dynamics into dancefloor-friendly d&b. "Big Trouble" is a constantly shifting slice of True Playaz-style jungle with wildstyle drums and stabbing bass galore. "NY Crunk N Bass" from Class of '98 (Fish Posh and Willie Ross) delivers exactly that, alternating between thug rap snippets and ragga mix-

tape blasts. Trust shows his melodic side on "Only You," which opens with Audio Angel's heartfelt soul vocals before exploding into a wall of distorted bass. Equal parts sweet and nasty. *Tomas Palermo*

### DJ C & QUALITY DIAMOND

#### LET IT BILLIE

Scandal Bag/US/7

Boston's DJ C finally issues his mashed-up d&b rework of Shinehead's "Billie Jean." One of John Peel's (RIP) fave cuts on dubplate, C's 7" single comes in both straight-ahead and rough jungle versions. Quality Diamond really nices up the mic on this one—"Clean mind clean heart" he chats before launching into a double-time lyric. The dancehall/d&b vibes and limber DJ toasts should get any sideline posers to hit the dancefloor. *Peter Teller*

### DRUMSOUND & BASSLINE SMITH

#### SMOKERS ANTHEM

Worldwide Audio/UK/12

Drumsound & Bassline Smith don't let up for a minute with their ruthless hardstep output, which rarely wavers from their patented aggressive, bouncy two-step sound. This duo knows their way around both overdriven synths and massively compressed drums. While "Grand Theft Auto 2" sounds like Kurt Cobain's guitar riffs over a hard drum track, while "Smokers Delight"—with its "Under Mi Sensi" reggae sample and round, rubber-dub bass lick—inspires nuff one-foot skankin'. *DJ Chopper*

### LOMAX, KUBIKS & BCEE

#### DO WE FALL

Wildstyle/UK/12

Only on its eighth release, Wildstyle has infused the drum & bass scene with the same kind of quality music and intricate arrangements that Defunked and Soul:r initiated a few years ago. Both sides of this single feature super-clean drum programming, sparse, sweet swathes of pads, string samples and an array of ear-catching sound effects. I'm partial to

Lomax and Bcee's exotic and shimmering track "Impossible Dream," built on atmospheric Arp synths, orchestral strings and a Turkish flute riff. Dreamy. *Tomas Palermo*

### ADAM F

#### 8 BALL

Breakbeat Kaos/UK/12

Adam F seems intent on hypnotizing the dancefloor. The man pays particular attention to every sound (transformed old school hip-hop samples, sinuous upright bass riffs, R&B snippets) in his diverse and choppy tracks. That's a good thing 'cause when his manic drums and hooky dropouts are rendered to vinyl, DJs and dancers reap the rewards of Adam's sharp ears. "8 Ball" hits the corner pocket dead on with all the above—game over! *Peter Teller*

### CAPONE

#### STYLE BABY

Test/UK/12

Capone tracks are, in a word, brutal. They're also relentless, distinctive and push the limits of the volume threshold. No wonder DJs like Andy C, Mampi Swift and Grooverider rinse Test plates with regularity. While "Style Baby" pulls no punches (the trademark compressed drums and overdriven bass will tear lesser speaker cones to shreds), the surprise A-side tune "No Food," which opens with melodic jazz Rhodes chords, unfolds as a bass-driven sub roller. Think Krust's Full Cycle and V output and you get the idea. Another Test triumph. *DJ Chopper*

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**HIP-HOP GUEST REVIEWS: DJ VADIM**

Russian ex-pat Vadim Peare relocated to South London and around 1992 the hip-hop enthusiast started messing around with a cheap sampler and his record collection. This culminated in Jazz Fudge, a label that would bear DJ Vadim's first single, "Abstract Hallucinating Gasses," and the album *Headz Ain't Ready*. While mid-'90s trip-hop labels like Mo' Wax and Cup of Tea chose traditional instrumental hip-hop routes, Vadim's Jazz Fudge issued beathead music that was both truly avant garde and philosophical. Three albums for Ninja Tune soon followed (*U.S.S.R. Repertoire*, *U.S.S.R. Life From The Other Side* and *U.S.S.R. The Art of Listening*). Having toured nearly every continent and collabora'ing with MCs like Slug, Gift of Gab and Moshun Man, Vadim now embarks on One Self, a trio project with Blu Rum 13 and Yarav Bravo. We originally asked Vads to lace us with his fave singles, but he had his own plan in mind: "I decided to talk about a couple of things that probably people in the US have never heard of or are unavailable except via the web." *Derek Grey* [www.djvadim.com](http://www.djvadim.com)

**TASK FORCE BIG SMOKE** Home Grown/UK/12

Task Force (a.k.a. Chester P Hackenbush) and Farmer Gilles have been causing a minor storm on the London underground. They're always poignant and on-point, whether they're rapping about social injustice, racism, drug running, inner city life or the beauty of butterflies, monsoon mountain biking and tornado skydiving. Can't quite think of any other rap group anywhere in the world who can do that. *DJ Vadim*

**SOLO LOS SOLO TODO EL MUNDO LO SABES** K Industria/SPN/LP

Solo Los Solo is DJ/producer Griffi and Juan Solo hailing from Barcelona. Production-wise, Griffi is one of the sickest and most slept on producers with complex, musical patterns not too dissimilar to JayDee-meets-Ammon Contact-meets-Madlib, but on another level. *DJ Vadim*

**HOCUS POCUS 73 TOUCHES** Onandon/FRA/LP

Hocus Pocus hails from Nantes on the west coast of France and is made up of rapper/musician 20Syl and C2C (the two-time world DMC team DJ champions). This isn't a mix of relentless madman cuts and shouting but something extremely musical and lyrical with subtle scratches, atmospheres and reflections. *DJ Vadim*

**DOOLEY-O**

**SOAPS**

Lewis/UK/12

"I got reservations/dinner and a limo/But your ass wanna stay home with Jay Leno/Watching re-runs of Ricki Lake/You'd be the first one to go on Eliminate..." Yes, Dooley-O's talking about women who watch too much TV. And he's hungry! "Instead of making a steak/you were Making The Band..." It's a humorous send up with a serious side: "The idiot box is tearing us apart." Take that UPN, MTV and Fox! B-side "Monday Night" is a superb battle rap that recalls classics by Kool G Rap & Polo or Big Daddy Kane. *Phil Phloe*

**OKAI**

**BOUT THAT**

Soundchron/US/12

Produced by Ayatollah, Okai's single should remind hip-hop fans of Gang Starr, Mobb Deep and Black Moon's gritty OG sound—a welcome change in this bling era. Why? 'Cause it means Okai (who reps East Flatbush) has to be as dramatic and lyrical as Ayatollah's funky beat. No monotone flow and an 808 here, son. "Face Off" features Planet Asia who informs us that he's "comin' with force," which he does over a sample-filtered, low-slung groove. *Duncan Phillips*

**TATE THE GREAT**

**TIME FOR HIP-HOP**

Overground/US/12

Tate's rugged, no-nonsense working class lyrics reflect the Chicago streets he originates from. Hot production from DJ JFX, Babu (Dilated Peoples) and



**FUTURE JAZZ GUEST REVIEWS: NICKODEMUS**

A man of few words and many beats, Nicholas DeSimone has established himself as America's foremost global beat fusionist. Whether he's remixing Argentinian bandoneon player Astor Piazzolla or mixing it up with live musicians at the Turntables on the Hudson parties he helped co-found, Nick is usually not far from an array of conga, zither and sitar-wielding pals. Along with DJ/producer mates like Zeb, Osiris, DJ Angola and others, Nick has brought the true melting pot sounds of his native New York to listeners everywhere. His recent *Coney Island Love* CD (Wonderwheel) saw him stirring up globalized tracks by Quantic, Shantel, Zimpala and The Rootsman, while his single "Cleopatra in New York" (with Carol C) is still making the rounds in worldbeat-friendly lounges. The man moves at the Big Apple's pace—there's always a DJ gig or production session around the corner—so we were honored to pin him down for a few recommended releases. *Tomas Palermo* [www.wonderwheelrecordings.com](http://www.wonderwheelrecordings.com)

**DUBAWARE SOUNDSYSTEM EASTERN CHILD** Musicpark/US/12

My favorite beginning of the night/set the vibe right tune. When the vocals come in, there's an overwhelming feeling of peace and ease in the air. *Nickodemus*

**KINNY & HORNE US ON FIRE (ORIGINAL MIX)** Tru Thoughts/UK/12

A flirty love tune that flips the old "Bam Bam" horns into a nice new mid-tempo groove. Lyrics are singing: "I return your smile/loving you in my own kind of way." She sounds like a bonafide cutie! *Nickodemus*

**CANDELA ALLSTARS (MATTY 2 DEEP REMIX) BROBOMBIQUE** Candela/PR/12

This smooth and melodic house groove has the catchiest authentic Puerto Rican vocals and percussion. A sureshot for hips worldwide! *Nickodemus*

**FIVE CORNERS QUINTET**

**CORNERSTONES**

Ricky Tick/FIN/12

The Five Corners Quintet is at the forefront of a burgeoning postmodern jazz scene in Scandinavia. The aptly titled "Straight Up" pays it forward with zeal and attitude. The vocals of Mark Murphy compliment the samba "Before We Say Goodbye," and the ballad "Blue Circles" with French chanteuse Okou's smoky vocals ends it all far too soon. *Velanche*

**ALEX ATTIAS PRESENTS MUSTANG**

**10,000 LEAGUES DEEPER**

Compost/GER/12

Belgian duo Trickski's seductive and epic Weather Report mix is like a hot tease holding back just enough to make you want more, with Bembe Segue cooing over percolating beats. F-Com honcho Laurent Garnier goes peaktime with a house mix hard and naughty enough to induce some serious marks...on the floor, that is. *Velanche*

**MADVILLAIN (FOUR TET & KOUSHIK**

**REMIXES)**

Stones Throw/USA/12"

"Tis a game of two halves as they say. I'm only a casual Four Tet fan; intrigued, but not a fanatic. However, after the jazz hooligan madness of "Meat Grinder" I look forward to more of the Four Tet-with-vocals formation. While Stones Throw has the balls to team-up the masked one, the mad one and Four Tt, it's unfortunate the Koushik mixes didn't score so well, missing the high standard of the originals. *Franz Carr*

**AMERIE**

**ONE BOSSA (DON RITMO RE-EDIT)**

Shoes/US/12

A mash-up of sorts, wherein Amerie's back-up vocals get grafted onto leftover Dave Brubeck-meets-Kyoto Jazz Massive bossa jazz before fading back into Rich Harrison's brilliant Meters cut-up. Not bad, but it promised more and the fact is we all know it: the original is just *that* much better. *Alexis Georgopoulos*

**BAKURA**

**REACH THE SKY ALBUM SAMPLER**

Especial/UK/12

Evolving from their Bedford, UK-based band The Collective Unconscious, Dominic "Domu" Stanton and Robert Marin's Bakura project has taken a live approach to broken boogie studio numbers. Tracks like the rude "Bada"—a speedy, spacey fusion number featuring aerobic live horn fills and jagged, locomotive beats—and the disco-funk influenced "Play That Game" and "Lately" foreshadow an emotive but party-ready collection from this dynamic duo. *Derek Grey*

**SIMON GRAY**

**THE GALÁCTICA SUITE**

Papa/UK/12

Based in Hamburg, Australian Gray is a keyboard wiz who's toured with Incognito and remixed Everything But The Girl. That experience pays off on a funky track featuring live horns from The TinMen, swirling keys and bouncy drums—a full arrangement that evokes Earth, Wind & Fire's exuberant "September" era. "The Galáctica Suite" brings the heat. *Hector Cedillo*

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## THE DOWN-BEAT DIASPORA BY RICO "SUPERBIZZEE" WASHINGTON GETTING YOU UP ON THE SHARPEST SOUL, FUNK AND R&B.

Greetings, congregation, and welcome to the Divine Church of the Blessed Boogie. I am The Good Reverend Superbizzee, devoted to spreading the gospel of the baddest soundz around.

Members of the congregation, if you thought Japan settled on bottling the extract of the very essence of hip-hop culture, wait till your senses take in "Pick Up The Pieces One By One" and "Hot Pants Road" (Monaurail & Empowerment), two 45s from Japanese band **Osaka Monaurail**. These cats have devoted their blood, sweat, tears and careers to recreating the sounds of James Brown's incomparably tight rhythm section, The J.B.'s. Truth & Soul and Daptone...beware.

Meanwhile, in an undisclosed recording studio somewhere on the West Coast, **Sa-Ra** is devising the supreme takeover. Select classified files are being leaked via the good folks over at **Sound In Color**. Their five-track EP, "2nd Time Around," will be issued as a double vinyl gatefold set this fall. Cop the CD version; get a bonus track. Yeah...it figures.

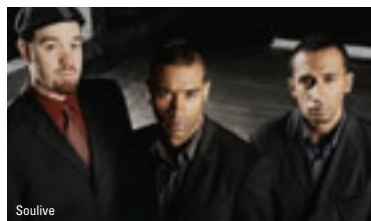
Following their exodus from Blue Note, funk-soul brothas **Soulive** are back in the saddle with a new album, *Break Out* (Concord), and a new single, "Back Again," featuring **Chaka Khan** wailing on the mic check.

Church, we all know that patience is a true virtue. But judging from the salty chorus to Ex-Black Eyed Peas chanteuse **Kim Hill's** bangin' single "Right Now" (Concrete Grooves), homegirl ain't feelin' delayed gratification. "See, I've waited forever/ while my breasts are perky and before I'm old and gray/I want my sh\*t out right now/ like, today." Let the church say amen.

**DJ Jazzy Jeff** is gearing up to release what brazenly promises to be the "antidote to Rhythm & Bullsh\*t;" namely, the long-awaited debut album from R&B crooner **V** entitled *The Revelation Is Now Televised* (BBE). Jeff's also been busy mixing a set of contemporary soul gems for Groovin' Records featuring the likes of **Leela James**, **Martin Luther** and **Dwele** to be dubbed *The Soul Mixtape*.

Man, I've wasted enough spit in heated debates with know-it-all music snobs about my beloved D.C.'s musical merit beyond go-go. And finally, here's a 7" slice from the cellar that will pimp slap the hell out of all nonbelievers. **Soul Line/Ten12 Records** have dusted off a five-alarm fire starter for "She's The One" by D.C. soul outfit **Diplomats** (now flush your mind of those Dipset images).

Church, word is **Sly Stone's** catalog of psychedelic delicacies is getting a second overhaul (see 1979's *Ten Years Too Soon*) in *Different Strokes By Different Folks* (Legacy/ Sony). But with a mixed bag of guests like **D'Angelo**, **Maroon 5** and **Steven Tyler**, this family affair seems kinda dysfunctional. How dare you tread on sacred ground and desecrate the funk? Who in the funk do you think you are? Well, that concludes this month's sermon. Now go out and be deliverers of the good word!



Soulive



Steven Tyler



12092



30498

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## Digable Planets Beyond the Spectrum: The Creamy Spy Chronicles

Filled with literate lyrics, honey-smooth flow, and inventive arrangements, the Digable Planets albums redefined hip-hop, and set standards for the generation of soul poets and innovative producers that followed. *Beyond the Spectrum: The Creamy Spy Chronicles* effortlessly reiterates the classic hits, remixes, and rarities that brought Digable Planets into the forefront of jazz-influenced hip-hop, and made them the venerable trio they are today.

## Jazzanova Blue Note Trip: Lookin' Back/Movin' On

Digging in the crates of the Blue Note vaults, world-renowned DJ collective, JAZZANOVA, has compiled and mixed the new *Blue Note Trip: Lookin' Back/Movin' On*. Pulling vintage material from Horace Silver, Bobby Hutcherson, Eddie Gale, Donald Byrd, and Bobbi Humphrey, to name a few, Jazzanova has created energetic moments with melodies and arrangements that will set the perfect backdrop for your shindig! This limited edition 2-disc set and the specially packaged full-length vinyl are both in stores now.



## AFTER SILENCE BY MARTIN DE LEON II EXPLORING THE OUTER ORBITS OF LEFTFIELD, ELECTRONIC MUSIC AND EVERYTHING IN BETWEEN

Beats are bespectacled and grow beards while questioning the future this month. Despite the slow fade of summertime, we keep looking at the clouds above. And remember what's written all over the city walls: tomorrow always comes.

'70s aesthetics always come too, and the ticky-tack drums and syrupy tempos of that decade are what make Bay Area trio **Run Return's** heart pound. They might not have on their **Can** t-shirts, but these dudes are futurists looking backwards. On their dumb hot 7" single, "Animals Are Beautiful People" (n5MD), they beautifully suffer from Anticon-itis with laptop instrumentals that are lush, trashy and yet melodic—something they share with likeminded eggheads **Subtle**. "Mercury Retrograde" throws slinky synthesizers against complicated drumming (both fake and so real), making dancefloors out of computer screens.

Canadians, like computers, are the future. Vancouver's Ache Records' **Div/orce 7"** series pairs underground electronic folks with their scruffy-headed noise rock counterparts. On the third of a proposed nine-part series, **Hrvatski** (a.k.a Keith Fullerton Whitman) bumps into New York's **Sightings**, a trio best known for their dissonant neon noise. Hrvatski does his math on "Une Drole De Journee" where drums birth more drums until 8-bit melodies wonderfully take over. Sightings come out with crashing harmonies of feedback on "Back To Back"—all formless screams and beefy bass like machines making out.

France is where robots come from. Frenchman **Feadz**, both a DJ and producer, releases his fourth EP, "Forward4," for the German Bpitch label and

leaves eyes open with two sides of blurry beats. "On All Fours" is like a videogame version of the *Knight Rider* theme in Paris while "Resurector" shakes plastic hips with cross-eyed synths and a hip-hop ethos melting around the pulse of endless pitter-pattering drums.

Endings are rarely pretty things and for New Jersey hip-hop crew **dälek** it's no different. The band announced that its longtime DJ, Still, has left to work on other projects. The DJ's new work, *Remains* (Public Guilt), is 34 minutes of intricate turntable composition (resembling **Philip Jeck** and **Otomo Yoshihide**) where sadness and tiny melodies make for a terrific record—sometimes endings make sense.

Animal masks, on the other hand, don't make a lick of sense. Mexican post-rock outfit **Austin TV** has been laying down preppy, Stereolab-esque instrumentals for four years. Their numerous EPs, including "La Ultima Noche Del Mundo," don't require a Spanish dictionary, but—like fellow Mexico City experimenters **Café Tacuba**—they will make you feel like you're watching the future from the Zocalo.

Japan's **Rebel Familia** is also worth eyeing out for their study of Jamaican rhythms on their **Techno Animal-meets-Deadbeat** post-dub. Rubbery basslines and echoed drums noisily bump into each other on *Solidarity* (Cisco Records) and their self-titled work. Geography, in electronic music, is a ghost.



Philip Jeck



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**LUCKY 13**  
BY TOPH ONE

So there I was minding my own business—breeding mosquitoes so I could try out that West Nile virus I had been hearing so much about—when my friends arrived for their bi-weekly intervention. “Just a minute,” I told them, “I’ve got to feed my guys.” And I hopped out onto the roof to tend to the local seagulls. We’ve formed a nice bond over the years—they give me an excuse to leave the house on these groggy afternoons, and I supply all the cold french fries and stale tortillas they can gulp down before the crows show up. “Come in here—we’ve got to talk!” yelled my worrisome pals from the living room. It was a perfect foggy San Francisco afternoon—I had The Epoxies on the stereo and a batch of mashed potatoes on the stove—I didn’t need their meddlesome crap today. “Do me a favor—go upstairs into my spare bedroom and check on that large petri dish. I think it should be about ready.”

**1. JNEIRO JAREL THREE PIECE PUZZLE** (Ropeadope/US/CD) This Philly (by way of Houston and NYC) cat is on a stylistic par with Freestyle Fellowship and Native Tongues, while sonically holding his own amongst current heavyweights Sa-Ra and JayDee. Jarel proves with tracks like “Big Bounce Theory,” “Do Yo Thang” and “Get Yuh Own” that we are listening to greatness.

**2. CAIT LA DEE BEAUTY SCHOOL DROPOUT** (L4L Music/US/CD) Take the authority of Aretha, the harmonies of En Vogue and the femme fatale ballsiness of Stevie Nicks and you come close to this young Bay Area singer/songwriter’s depth. Dee’s is a voice to behold.

**3. V/A NUBLU RECORDS SAMPLER** (Nublu/US/10) If these are the sounds coming out of the East Village’s Nublu lounge, I’m hitting the rails and getting my ass out there right away. From Kudu’s hard electro-rock to the glorious Forro in the Dark featuring Brazilian actor/musician Seu Jorge (*The Life Aquatic, City of God*), this makes me happy day after day.

**4. V/A HIP-HOP ROOTS** (Tommy Boy/US/2xLP) You’ve probably owned most if not all of these essential breaks over the years, but have scratched or lost them all several times over. Maybe you started collecting late and never thought you’d ever own these classics. Or, if artists like Billy Squire, ESG and the Jimmy Castor Bunch don’t register at all—here’s your chance to learn.

**5. DARKAT “OMNIA AB UNO”** (Nutmeats/US/12EP)  
**D-DAY ONE “LOOP EXTENSIONS”** (Content/US/LP)  
Two fine slabs of mostly instrumental hip-hop progression from Berkeley and LA, respectively. Some stuff for the warehouse art parties, some stuff for the come-down session in your living room. Both cats damn well know their way around a sampler.

**6. NICKODEMUS ENDANGERED SPECIES** (Wonderwheel/US/CD) Nickodemus paints his collage of NYC life with a global palette of sounds and voices from almost every corner of the map—contrasting cultures overlap and meld into a cohesive whole. Am I being too highbrow? This is worldwide party music—now dance, motherfuckers!

**7. THE EARL “LIFE FEAT. STRO”** (Footlong/US/12) Seems like this guy’s always got three records in my bag at any one time. By now I just pack the damn things up and head to the gig, I know it’s gonna be hot. Period.

**8. LIGHTHEADED “TIMELESS”** (Tres/US/12) File this one next to Foreign Legion, P.U.T.S. and—why not?—The Earl. Neck-snappin’ beautiful goddamn hip-hop. I love it.

**9. OVERTONE “GIVE IT AGAIN”** (RedBud/US/12) Oh man, this is my *joint* of the month. The original mix is all heavy and rough with a ragga toaster, the Dither Down Mix gets all electro-bounce, and finally Inverse Cinematics breaks the whole thing open with some ill Bugz-sounding nastiness.

**10. STRANGER BAY “NU 4 U EP”** (Grayhound/US/12EP) This might as well be Larry Levan remixing The Clash. So now we know what heaven sounds like.

**11. BLACKSOUL “THE STRONG EP”** (Icon/US/12EP) Hotshit house music from a Croatian brother! “Strong” is straight-up West Coast bump, where “No More Trouble” is on a jazzy, poolside vibe. Shots of slivovitz for me and Tomislav Pasanec!

**12. SPANK ROCK “PUT THAT PUSSY ON ME—DIPLO TONIGHT REMIX”** (Money Studies/US/12) Baltimore versus North Philly as Diplo funkrocks up the ready-quivering barnstormer from Spank Rock and Xxxchange.

**LUCKY 13 THE DO-OVER** (Hollywood/party) Jhrmatic SoundSystem’s Chris Haycock along with Ubiquity’s Jamie Strong and MC Aloe Black bring together the real-deal LA party people every Sunday afternoon for a free, outdoor soiree that’s small on size but large in heart. Keep on rockin’!

TophOne’s mix CD *Live Loud & Dirty* is available at [www.fabric8.com/redwine](http://www.fabric8.com/redwine). Hear him every Wednesday at the RedWine Social at Dalva in SF.



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*Mens & Womens*



## IN THE STUDIO KEN GIBSON

AN LA EXPERIMENTAL TECHNO MASTERMIND MEETS US AT THE BAR IN HIS TIME MACHINE.

WORDS: TOMAS PALERMO PHOTO: DREW REYNOLDS

Kenneth James Gibson. You'd think a first, middle and last name would be enough for one man. But after Los Angeles-based minimal techno producer and Austin, TX native Gibson issued his first shattered electronic works as 8 Frozen Modules (*The Confused Electrician* on City Slang) in 1997, he continued to morph like the Woody Allen character Zelig, and a torrent of new aliases followed. Gibson's output under such bizarre and arresting production names as Bal Cath, Dubloner and Premature Wig appears on SoCal labels Skor and Headinghome, while work as [a]pendics.shuffle is released on Seattle's Orac and Matthew "Safety Scissors" Curry's Proptronix imprint.

Although Gibson's music is as different as his names are unique, a trio of main influences unites his sound: dub, minimal techno and experimental electronic sound design. Gibson obsesses over the minuscule details of each recording; precise fragments of sound are arranged and scattered on his Eight Frozen Modules albums *Random Activities* and *Broken Sunsets* (Phthalo), *Thought Process Disorder* (Orthlorng Musork) and *Crumbling and Responding* (g25). With further releases on heavyweight international labels like Tigerbeat 6, Mille Plateaux and Planet Mu, there's no question that Gibson has emerged as one of North America's most important young composers. In many ways, Kenneth James Gibson is an American Richard D. James.

Gibson's latest projects include a collaboration with fellow dub-electronic seeker Jack Dangers (of Meat Beat Manifesto and Tino Corp) as Hiss And Buzz, and the launch of Gibson's own Adjunct Audio label. Riding off rave reviews in Europe for his glitchy [a]pendics.shuffle singles on Orac, Gibson took some time out of his hectic studio sessions to give us the lowdown on his gear and life.

### WHEN DID YOU START PRODUCING ELECTRONIC MUSIC?

I started making electronic tracks in 1994. The first release was early '96 or late '95.

### AT LAST COUNT, HOW MANY ALIASES ARE YOU USING?

I use seven that have releases out and two new ones to come, which are Hiss and Buzz (with Jack Dangers) and Whoa Buck (with Orac founder Konstantin Gabbro). I also started a new label called Adjunct, which is run by Konstantin and I.

### WHO'S YOUR FAVORITE DUB PRODUCER?

It's a toss up between King Tubby and Mad Professor. Tubby passed away early and his sounds, for the time they came out, were the best there was. He was the master and pioneer! Mad Professor just got really crazy later. Some really mad fucked up next level dub shit...

### WHAT MUSIC MAKES YOU NOSTALGIC?

Lots of music makes me nostalgic. Daft Punk's first record (the good one) seems to do that, some older Meat Beat Manifesto, The Orb, The Smiths, Seefeel, etc., etc.

### WHAT'S YOUR MAIN STUDIO SET-UP RIGHT NOW? GIVE US A VIRTUAL TOUR!

Right now my studio set-up is pretty basic. I use a PC laptop. I use the Evolution X-Session and an ASR-10 for MIDI controllers. I monitor through a dusty Mackie 16-channel mixer and record vocals with

shitty mics through a Samson mixer. I use Cubase SX, Fruity Loops, tons of VST plugs (such as all the Native Instruments stuff), DFX, Pluggo, and tons of free stuff that I find on the web. I also have guitars and bass lying around that I sometimes bust out.

### HOW DO YOU MONITOR YOUR TRACKS? DO YOU RECOMMEND ANY KIND OF SPEAKERS OR HEADPHONES?

I use Alesis Monitor Ones and an Alesis RA 100 amp. I love the monitor ones and will use them forever. They don't make them anymore but you can find them used and I highly suggest it.

### WHAT'S ONE PIECE OF HARDWARE THAT DOESN'T EXIST THAT YOU'D LIKE TO SEE IN THE FUTURE?

That would be the time machine I am working on. It will have an onboard studio and bar. The studio will change through the years and new ideas will develop.

### FILL IN THE BLANKS:

I have made hundreds of tracks that sound like: "shit." When I'm not making music, I'm probably: "getting loaded." Three fellow artists that I admire include: "Bruno Pronsato, Phthalocyanine, John Tejada."

### DO YOU EVER FIND YOURSELF MAKING TOO MUCH MUSIC?

Yes, all the time. I just took a much needed break!

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### ORTOFON DJ QBERT SCRATCH CARTRIDGE

MSRP: \$215 (CONCORDE), \$135 (OM), [WWW.ORTOFON.COM](http://WWW.ORTOFON.COM)

Ortofon has been steadily moving in on the hip-hop DJ market, and having perennial deckwrecka Qbert on board certainly hasn't hurt the cause. Capitalizing on such reputable endorsement, Ortofon has released the official **DJ Qbert scratch cartridge** in both Concorde (all-in-one) and OM (headshell-ready) versions. Both feature the best skip resistance in the Ortofon line. Shure's M44-7 is still top dog when it comes to skip-free cutting, but the Qbert brings significantly better sound quality and the ability to more precisely place the needle. Skinny heads *can* be useful sometimes, apparently. *Evan Shamoan*



### NUMARK IDJ IPOD MIXER

MSRP: \$399, [WWW.NUMARK.COM](http://WWW.NUMARK.COM)

Could this dual dock mixer be what DJs have been salivating about since the debut of Apple's little white monster? The dual channel, PC/Mac-friendly **Numark iDJ iPod Mixer** has arrived, delivering the official integration of the iPod with mixing technology for digital DJs. With several inputs for headphones and other playback devices, a dual iPod docking station, crossfader, spindle for turntable placement and a sufficiently futuristic design, you'll be the most technologically sound DJ in the club. In addition to universal connectivity to computers, samplers, CD players and such, the iDJ also has a microphone input complete with level and tone control. This could be the start of a revolution. *Fred Miketa*



### COWON SYSTEMS iAUDIO X5 MEDIA PLAYER

MSRP: \$299, [WWW.COWONAMERICA.COM](http://WWW.COWONAMERICA.COM)

Nowadays it seems that small is not small enough when it comes to media players. People want small and *slim*. That's where the **Cowon Systems iAudio X5 Media Player** comes in. Slimmer than an iPod and packed with a 20GB harddrive, X5 plays MP3, OGG, WMA, WAV and MPEG4 video files (after conversion) and includes an FM receiver, plus voice and line-in recording. You can view photos, text documents and movies with the security of 14 hours of battery life. X5 is compatible with PC, Mac and Linux platforms. It's an iPod on the Slimfast diet, with all the cheesecake you can eat. *Derek Grey*

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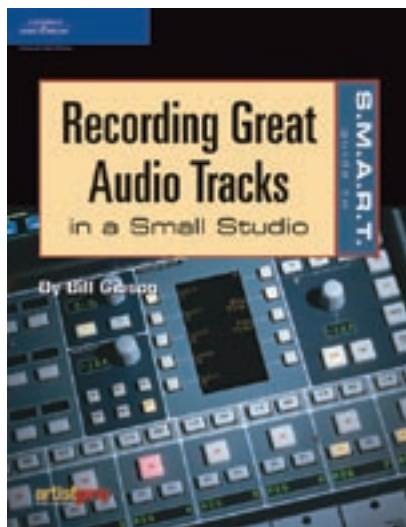
What good is that endless list of plug-ins if you can barely control any of them? Of the countless controllers out now, the **Photon X25** is the best for its size (two octaves) and price range. It's easy to set up, powers off of USB, batteries or adapter, and is a solid piece of pretty plastic. The 10 endless knobs (that can be assigned three layers deep), 10 buttons and two wheels are easy to configure. It also has an XYZ Dome—which is great if you want to rock Absynth with kitschy, hand-waving Theremin action. *Marc Kate*



LOGITECH WIRELESS HEADPHONES FOR MP3

MSRP: \$129, WWW.LOGITECH.COM

Being chained to your MP3 player with a headphone jack and wires is so Y2K. It's 2K5, and wireless life is essential. Using a tiny plug-in transmitter that fits atop most MP3 players, **Logitech Wireless Headphones** for MP3 offer excellent sound quality within a range of 30 feet. Park your player in the kitchen and go fix the car in the garage. Put your Rio in your backpack and forget the wire-routing tangle. Integrated controls on the side of the headphones allow you to adjust the volume of your music directly from the headphones, which take approximately 2.5 hours to charge. Happily, these work with any MP3 or CD player that includes a standard 3.5mm headphone jack. *Devon Pierce*



THE S.M.A.R.T. GUIDE TO RECORDING GREAT AUDIO TRACKS

MSRP: \$35.99, WWW.COURSEPTR.COM

Part of a series of audio recording guidebooks designed with the layman in mind, Bill Gibson's **The S.M.A.R.T. Guide To Recording Great Audio Tracks-In A Small Studio** features chapters on just about everything needed for independent recording. The instrumental sections are well thought-out and immediately applicable, while the chapter on acoustics avoids overly scientific language in favor of a straightforward, "for dummies" approach. In addition, this book comes with a huge bonus—a companion DVD with page-specific audio and video references; you can observe it applied exactly as it is described on paper. *Alexander Posell*



M-AUDIO DRUM & BASS RIG SOFTWARE

MSRP: \$125.00, WWW.M-AUDIO.COM

Combining a whole rack's worth of music production tools into one virtual instrument, **M-Audio Drum & Bass Rig** has more loops and breaks than a Six Flags rollercoaster. Don't let the name deceive you: with ethnic percussion and instruments, and programmable bass guitar and drum machines, D&B Rig will suit all kinds of genres and tastes. When used within a sequencing environment like Ableton Live, one-touch loop recording is at hand, using presets or your own break creations. The oscillator unit offers a plethora of pattern-based bass notes, and the built-in effects rack expands on your sequencer's tools. For the price, you'd be a fool not to add this to your arsenal. *Devon Pierce*

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SOUNDCRAFT UREI 1601S  
SCRATCH MIXER

MSRP: \$1,199.99, WWW.UREIDJ.COM

The word is out. The '70s most popular and sturdy mixer company, Soundcraft, is back, reviving the vaunted Urei mixer. Rather than offering merely their mainstay rotary mixer, they've expanded the line with this *killer*, scratch-DJ friendly unit that'll give Rane and Vestax cause for worry. **UREI 1601S's** wealth of features includes 360 degree customizable phono/line switches, crossfader monitor selector, backlit headphone out with EQ, input and output level monitoring LEDs, hi, mid and low EQ rotary pots and a send- and return-effects loop. All knobs and faders are replaceable, and the built-in sampler allows one-shot, loop and reverse playback modes. A sampling battle mixer? This is the future. *Tomas Palermo*



GREY BPM 103 LED  
COUNTER

MSRP: \$105, WWW.GROOVEDIS.COM

I'm the DJ nerd who writes the bpm of every track on a piece of masking tape affixed to the record jacket. I'll admit that my counting methods—a Palm Pilot metronome tool or the click track in Reason—have often been flawed. When you're blending dancehall 7"s at a rate of one per minute, its gotta be 100% accurate. The **Grey BPM 103** is a compact, plastic-housed counter that plugs into any DJ mixer, headphone jack or 1/4" line out. It displays your music's bpm on its large, blue LED screen in seconds. It's missing a battery-power option (it runs on AC), and a 1/4"-to-miniplug converter would be nice. But overall, BPM 103 takes the guesswork out of creating a perfect-tempo mix. *Derek Grey*



ZERO-G KONCEPT  
AND FUNKTION  
REFILL FOR REASON

MSRP: \$139.99, WWW.ZERO-G.CO.UK

The loopsmiths at Zero-G have brought their premier drum & bass construction kit to Reason, one shortened snare hit at a time. **Koncept and Funktion** features over a gigabyte of material, including a huge selection of drum, organ, synth, bass and FX samples. While the loops are designed as REX2 files, Zero-G has also broken out many of its sounds into individual hits for use in ReDrum, NNXT, or NN1. The enormous assortment of chopped-up vocal samples and some great FX samples will keep that bass open for days like a bag of Frito Lays. *Evan Shamoan*



FRONTIER DESIGN  
GROUP TRANZPORT  
WIRELESS CONTROLLER

MSRP: \$249.00, WWW.FRONTIERDESIGN.COM

Sometimes I'd rather watch movies than work on music. Thankfully **TranzPort**, the first wireless DAW remote control, is less confusing than my TiVo remote. TranzPort controls ProTools, Logic, DP or any other DAW from your desk, from across the room or from a vocal booth while its backlit LCD display tells you what you need to know. However, with a little ingenuity, I'll soon be on my couch DJing MP3s with Tranzport in one hand and skimming through TiVo with the other. *Marc Kate*

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# WHITE SOX VERSUS CUBS

Dredging deep into the heart and mind of a Chicago baseball nut.

WORDS: J.R. NELSON ILLUSTRATION: DONNIE BAUER (WWW.MYDBMEDIA.COM)

October 27, 2004. The Beachwood Inn, a bar on Chicago's near Westside, is full of patrons, but eerily quiet. There is a once-in-a-century spectacular lunar eclipse in the warm night sky and the Boston Red Sox, the most famously hard-luck team in the annals of sport, is about to win the World Series for the first time in 86 years. As St. Louis Cardinals shortstop Edgar Renteria grounds into the final out and the Boston players start whooping and celebrating in the infield, nobody in the Beachwood has much of anything to say. "Huh," one of the bartenders opines. "Did you see that moon tonight?"

Since time immemorial, the annual Chicago baseball ritual has been watching somebody else play in, and win, the World Series. The Chicago White Sox haven't appeared in the fall classic since 1959, and were last world champions in 1917. The Chicago Cubs played in the 1945 World Series and have yet to return. Their last world title was in 1908. The only thing that truly connects these two franchises is their relative geography and utter lack of success. Other than that, they could hardly be more different.

The Cubs play in the friendly confines of Wrigley Field, an ancient and storied park on Chicago's Northside. Old-timey ambience, ivy-covered walls and beery sell-out crowds make it

one of the city's most popular tourist attractions. Wrigley draws plenty of dentist/lawyer yuppie dudes and their scantily clad ladyfriends and because the tickets are more expensive, especially for the good seats, they're usually the folks you see on TV.

The White Sox home is U.S. Cellular Field, a rather drably designed stadium where, if sitting in the upper deck and the stiflingly polluted summer air isn't too thick, one can see the notorious Robert Taylor Homes standing out across the Dan Ryan Expressway. It can be argued that the White Sox have a much larger black and Hispanic fan base than the Cubs because they draw so much support from the largely black Southside.

Caucasian White Sox fans from the surrounding neighborhoods tend to be one of two groups: auto mechanics or construction workers out to get drunk, or zealous baseball fanatics out to get drunk. The vibe of the place can be nasty. During a game two seasons ago, a father/son duo jumped out of the stands and attacked a Kansas City Royals coach right out on the field. A scant few weeks later another disgruntled fan emerged from the crowd to tackle the umpire.

Chicago baseball has led me to renounce God. I wish that was a joke, but you weren't there in '84 to see Steve Garvey run around the basepaths

with his fist in the air while mighty Cubs hurler Lee Smith could only dig at the mound with his huge cleats in defeat and disbelief. I was inconsolable and 10 years old, and my Mom put me to bed crying like an infant; from that tearful night forward, The Lord and I just didn't see eye to eye.

It's the great baseball riddle: how could *my* team lose? I have forsaken members of my own family (Uncle Stu, why be a Cardinals fan? Pujols is a bum and you have terminal brainfog from pounding too much Busch!). I have taunted strangers on Chicago streets wearing Yankees hats from a moving car. "Hey Dame Dash," I lustily shouted once, "What borough are you from?"

This fuels my unquenchable and unceasing Yankee-based eruptions of jealousy. My utter awe at their winning providence turns my heart into fire every summer, even when I'm trying to do normal person things like eat deep-fried Twinkies and shop for toilet paper and feel up some rump to the Crooklyn Clan on Friday night. But tonight was good. Final score: Sox 2-Yanks 1 in the Bronx. The White Sox still have the best record in the bigs. Who knows. Maybe this is our year?

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